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The Shape of Things

THE WAR THAT IS NOT A WAR TOOK ON THE aspect of a real conflict as it became apparent that Hitler's peace offensive had failed. German U-boats struck a body blow at British sea supremacy when they sank the heavily protected battleship Royal Oak, and, in spite of the convoy system, averaged two or three merchant ships a day. The Nazis even claim to have damaged the battle cruiser Repulse, one of the newest and most powerful units in the British navy. Although the German aerial attack on the Firth of Forth area was beaten off with heavy losses, it was the strongest yet launched against British or French territory. After a week of almost complete inactivity on the western front, the German forces are reported to be massing for an attack on the Maginot line. Having threatened to deliver an overwhelming blow in case his peace terms were rejected, Hitler must make some sort of attack on the West. The move was undoubtedly delayed by the rains which flooded the Rhine valley and turned the territory between the Westwall and the Maginot line into a morass. Germany's basic strategy has been handicapped by the fact that the Allies have been able thus far to maintain air supremacy on all sectors of the front. In the face of such obstacles, a Nazi drive would seem to be a measure of Hitler's desperation rather than of Nazi strength.

THE NEUTRALITY DEBATE HAS MOVED INTO its third week with Administration forces apparently fully in control of both houses. It is expected that the final vote in the Senate on ending the arms embargo will not differ materially from the poll of sixty-five to twenty-six which defeated the Tobey amendment. Pittman's capitulation on the ninety-day credit issue is likely to make for smoother sailing. Whether it will work against England and France is not clear since "cash" legally includes ninety-day acceptances of the Bank of England and the Banque de France. A few isolationists will undoubtedly follow Hoover's and Lindbergh's lead by proposing a distinction between arms used for offensive and defensive purposes, but the virtual impossibility of formulating such a distinction will probably keep this proposal from being taken too seriously by practical-minded Senators. Some modification is anticipated, however, in the section prohibiting American ships from visiting any ports belonging to belligerent powers. Whether Congress itself will specify the zones from which ships are to be barred or whether the decision will be left, as it properly should, with the State Department, remains to be seen. A compromise arrangement by which the President will be empowered to add to but not subtract from the prohibited zones is possible. On the assumption that the revised neutrality bill will soon pass the Senate without material change, speculation has begun on its chances in the lower house. Despite the fact that the House kicked over the traces in July and adopted the arms embargo against the will of the President, it is generally believed that the Administration now holds a twenty-vote margin for its repeal. The sharp gain in public sentiment for repeal, as reflected by the Gallup poll, has not passed unnoticed in Washington.

LINDBERGH'S SPEECH MAY HAVE GIVEN AID and comfort to Hitler, as Senator Pittman suggested, but that was not its chief fault. It was half-baked and puerile, an embarrassing effort considering the loud echoes it raised around the world. Its statements about Canada were worse than impractical; they were provocative and insulting. Lindbergh said that sooner or later the United States "must demand the freedom of this continent and its surrounding islands from the dictates of European powers," and that Canadians have no "right to draw this hemisphere into war simply because they prefer the Crown of England to American independence." If those words mean anything they mean that the United States should dictate the foreign policy of the entire North American continent and the islands of the Caribbean. Since Canada must rely on the United States for its defense, its policy must be coordinated with ours. These are quaint ideas to come from an American and a democrat. Only according to the philosophy of fascism is the strongest member of a group of nations entitled to control the foreign relations of its neighbors. The effect on the Senate of this excursion into political fantasy was contagious. Senator Lundeen proposed that the United States seize the British possessions in the Caribbean by force of arms as payment for the war debt. Neither Lindbergh's nor Lundeen's proposal will be seriously

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considered in this country or elsewhere. The British fleet need not desert the Atlantic traffic lanes to guard the West Indies from attack by the United States, and Canada need not take steps to defend its independence. But the episode suggests that there are times when innocents should not be allowed abroad.

NOW THAT CHAMBERLAIN HAS FOLLOWED Daladier in emphatically rejecting Hitler's peace terms, it is clear that Germany has lost the second major battle of this peculiar war. The first was lost when England and France survived the "war of nerves," ignored the threat of the Russo-German pact, and entered the war in Poland's behalf. Mr. Chamberlain's rejection of Hitler's peace was exceptionally forceful. He pointed out that the Führer had made no suggestion "for righting the wrongs done to Czechoslovakia and Poland," and declared that the burden of proof rested on the German government to show by acts that it intended to cease aggression and that its pledges would be kept. The statement was sufficiently unequivocal to allay any lingering doubts about the British government's determination to see the war through to the end. But it fell short of full effectiveness in its failure to set forth Britain's war aims in positive form. This failure has permitted the Nazis to insist that England is seeking to destroy the Reich and the German people. It also permits Hitler to say that he offered disarmament and participation in a general economic settlement, but that Chamberlain offered nothing. A definitive statement of the Allied war aims would be worth many divisions on the western front.

ELIOT JANEWAY IN AN ARTICLE ON PAGE 432 reveals admirably the herd-like tendency of American business to rush from one extreme to another. The outbreak of war started a stampede for goods based on hopes and fears rather than on any reasonable assessment of the facts. As a result, business indices look extremely healthy at the moment, but there is danger of an inventory crisis unless actual consumption begins to catch up with production. We agree that this situation requires the closest attention of the Administration, which should be ready to act quickly if necessary. Nevertheless, we think Mr. Janeway may have overstated his case a little. Before the war broke out, signs of a fall recovery were not lacking. The Federal Reserve production index had been moving up for several months, reaching 102 at the end of August, as compared with 92 in April. Records of actual consumption also indicated a marked upward trend, with retail sales in such varied lines as meat, gasoline, domestic electric power, and refrigerators attaining volumes never before achieved. Mr. Janeway mentions the new investment programs of the railroads and utilities. Other industries may follow in their wake with plans for plant replacement and additions, particularly after the new-issue market recovers from the first shocks of war. American business psychology is such that the shadow of war orders may prove a more potent stimulant than the substance of government spending.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION WAS never more needed than it is today. The national conference it has just held in New York City may help to moderate the renewed trend toward hysteria, snooping, and reaction masked as patriotism. Though the vociferous Dies suspected "Communist fronts" in the conference, as he imagines them in every movement for the defense or broadening of democracy, the character of the men and organizations that took part is sufficient answer. Foremost among the speakers was Attorney General Frank Murphy, and the Union announced that it held the conference in his honor in recognition of the establishment of a civil-liberties unit in the Department of Justice. The Attorney General's record at Washington, as in Michigan, shows how fully he deserves the honor, and no one will question his sincerity in pledging all his efforts to avoid the mistakes and "wrongs against liberty" that marked the Wilson Administration. Yet the newly published study of the activities of Creel's Committee on Public Information during the last war shows that war may release forces too strong for the best-intentioned of men. The line that divides sabotage and the truly subversive on the one hand from free expression on the other is apt to be blurred by passion. Perhaps Morris L. Ernst's vividly phrased proposal for an "SEC of the intellect" to require all movements and publications to disclose their source of funds might forestall more drastic action with the healthy corrective of full publicity.

LAST WEEK SAW CHINA MARKING UP THE most impressive list of triumphs it has achieved since the beginning of the war. Following up their great victory at Changsha, Chinese forces recaptured territory north of that city which had been held by the Japanese for more than a year. In Shansi the Eighth Route Army, made up of former Communist units, repulsed a series of attacks by strong Japanese motorized units, inflicting heavy losses. Chinese planes recently obtained from the Soviet Union staged three more successful attacks on the Hankow airport. It is admitted by the Japanese that several gasoline drums near the air field were exploded. The Chinese estimated that in addition the Japanese lost close to a hundred planes. With full allowance made for exaggeration, the raids were the most successful yet carried out by China. As a climax to their week of victories,

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Chinese troops are reported to have stormed the city of Hangchow, capital of Chekiang province, only ninety miles south of Shanghai. Hangchow has been in Japanese hands since Christmas Eve, 1937. Its capture would be an even greater feat than the saving of Changsha.

CANADA IS THREATENED WITH A LITTLE war of its own in the bitter electoral campaign now being carried on in the province of Quebec. Premier Duplessis, leader of the semi-fascist Union Nationale government and author of the notorious padlock law, has made conscription the chief issue of the campaign. Some of his supporters have gone so far as to threaten secession from the Dominion in the event conscription is adopted. The Liberal opposition, led by Adelard Godbout and Dominion Minister of Justice Ernest Lapointe, have also declared their opposition to conscription, but are insisting that Quebec Liberals are more likely to have weight in Ottawa than the discredited Duplessis government. Catholic leadership, influenced by the Vatican's stand on Poland, is said to be veering against Duplessis because of his totalitarian sympathies. But the rank and and file of the priesthood are standing with the Union Nationale in opposition to the Dominion government's war policy. The conscription issue is largely a false one in that no such step has been proposed in Ottawa. It is generally assumed that Canada can best serve the Allied cause by developing its war industries and providing raw materials. But should the time come when fresh troops are needed, the Dominion may find its very existence endangered by a combination of neo-fascist ideology and traditional separatist feeling.

NEXT YEAR *THE NATION* WILL BE SEVENTY-five years old. Founded just after the Civil War in an era of profound social and political changes, this journal has lived through the whole period of America's coming of age. It has seen the growth of the great combinations in industry, the rise of a powerful labor movement, the slow emergence of progressive thought as a dominant force in politics. From the day it was founded, with E. L. Godkin as its editor, *The Nation* has played an independent role, never tying either its fortunes or its policy to any political faction. It has always been unqualifiedly liberal. This does not mean that its opinions are today what they were in 1865 or in 1915; the laissez faire liberal of the last half of the last century became the supporter of protective social legislation in the early 1900's, and today he has added to his political philosophy a belief in the inescapable need of government intervention in the control of industry and finance. The editors of *The Nation* are, with some trepidation, planning a special anniversary issue to be published in the early weeks of 1940. In its pages we intend to tell the story of liberalism's rise in American life and to prospect a little into the years immediately ahead. This is not an easy assignment at a time when old-fashioned despotism is threatening the very existence of the critical intelligence. But perhaps this is a good moment to choose for taking stock of our past, of the heritage on which American liberal democracy was built, of our present-day problems, and of our capacity for survival and growth.

Baltic and Black Sea

MOSCOW'S whistle brought the helpless little Baltic states to heel quickly enough, and the Red Army and fleet are already taking over the bases won through diplomacy backed by threats. Now it is the turn of Finland and Turkey to accommodate themselves to Stalin's *Realpolitik*. They are proving tougher customers, however, and the pace of negotiations has slowed down accordingly. In neither case is there any exact information about the demands the Russian government has made on these countries. Rumors abound, but as many of them originate in Berlin, which is interested in embroiling Russia and Britain via Scandinavia and also in levering Turkey out of its alliance with the Allies, they must be treated with great reserve.

Until either agreement or breakdown has been reached in the talks with Finland and Turkey, it will remain hard to discover the long-range objectives of Russia. Berlin would have us believe that its new Communist friend is heart and soul with it in the struggle against the West. But forecasts of an imminent meeting between the two powers to decide the next step after the Allies' rejection of Hitler's "peace" terms have faded away. Whatever game Stalin is playing, it seems to be one of his own choosing.

The gathering of the Baltic states into the Soviet defense system, for instance, is of very little interest to the Western powers, which are unable in any case to break into the Baltic. Obviously its primary purpose is to strengthen Russia's strategic position vis-a-vis Germany, and it might be justified on the ground that security knows no law, though when other powers excuse their actions on this ground Communists are properly shocked.

On the assumption that Soviet diplomacy is concerned with mending its fences rather than extending its boundaries, agreement with Finland should not prove impossible. The Finns would probably be willing to lease the small islands in the Gulf of Finland to Russia, thus enabling the latter to insure the safety of its naval base at Kronstadt. But demands by Moscow going much beyond this could hardly be met without compromising Finland's independence. We may discount reports that the right to occupy the Finnish port of Hango and the

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Aaland Islands was included in the Russian terms. The possibility of a demand for a mutual-assistance pact seems to have been hinted at by Foreign Minister Errko when he stated in his radio address to America that Finland could not accept a proposal "which would strengthen the security of one side at the expense of the other." Obviously such a pact, concluded at the dictation of a great power, would rob Finland of its cherished neutrality, destroy its close association with the other states of the Nordic bloc, and reduce it to the position of a satellite. Russia's insistence on an agreement of this kind would almost certainly be resisted even if it meant war. It would afford clear proof that Moscow was aiming at more than Baltic security and had revived the imperialist ambitions of the czars.

The outcome of the negotiations with Finland should furnish a clue to Russia's Baltic objectives; those with Turkey will prove an acid test of its intentions regarding the Black Sea and points south. It is certain that the latter have not proceeded at all smoothly. Yet Turkey has long been on the friendliest terms with Russia and is obviously anxious not to disturb this relationship. The difficulty in reaching an agreement suggests, therefore, that demands have been made which the Ankara government considers to be incompatible either with its independence or with its obligations to other powers.

The latest reports state that Turkey is willing to remain neutral should Britain and France fight Russia but will not denounce its treaty obligation to join the Allies in the event of Italy's joining Germany. It is also said to have refused three major Russian demands—recognition of the partition of Poland, formation of a neutral Balkan bloc under the aegis of Russia and Germany, and the territorial expansion of Russia and Bulgaria at the expense of Rumania. The second and third of these proposals, if they really represent the Soviet terms, obviously form a severe stumbling-block to any agreement.

Neutrality subject to the joint direction of Moscow and Berlin means hardly less than the division of the Balkans into spheres of influence. It would destroy the Balkan League and thereby deprive Turkey of one of the chief bulwarks of its security. Nor could Turkey consent to the mutilation of Rumania. Not only is it on terms of close friendship with that country, but such an act would be completely at variance with its alliance with Britain and France, which have guaranteed Rumania against aggression.

Unless, therefore, Moscow's final demands turn out to be far more modest, the negotiations with Turkey seem likely to break down. With a Russia intent on "socialism in one country" and concerned only with keeping its own borders inviolate, Turkey can afford to remain on terms of friendship. But it cannot afford to facilitate the advance of a Russia which renews the expansive ideas of the Romanovs. Whenever in history Russia has pressed either toward the Mediterranean or toward the Persian Gulf, Turkey has girded itself to block the path. It seems inevitable that it will do so again.

Labor's Bourbons

TWO scenes, one at the A. F. of L. convention in Cincinnati, the other at the C. I. O. convention in San Francisco, may help us to understand why peace in the labor movement is as far off as ever. At Cincinnati, after the applause which greeted Homer Martin's speech had died away, the committee report on readmission of his automobile workers was presented to the convention. It must have been a bitter pill for Martin to swallow because it reserved the right to protect the jurisdiction of the craft unions in the automobile industry. This is the very issue on which Martin and the automobile workers left the A. F. of L. to form the C. I. O. four years ago. The A. F. of L. still declines to recognize the importance of industrial organization in mass-production industry.

If that scene is indicative of the A. F. of L.'s unwillingness or inability to face facts, another scene at San Francisco lit up the pride and intransigence of the C. I. O. and its leader, John L. Lewis. Governor Olson, the first liberal governor of California since Hiram Johnson, had just finished making a plea for unity in the ranks of labor. John L. Lewis rose to answer him. "The Congress of Industrial Organizations had to be organized," he said, "before Governor Olson could come here to make a speech." It is true that Olson would not have been elected if he had had to depend on the A. F. of L. But if the proud tenor of Lewis's reply was justified, its intransigence—whatever its cause—was not. Although the principal responsibility for the continued division in the ranks of labor continues to rest on those who caused that division in the first place, we expect more of Lewis because he knows better. It is true that the chief objection of the A. F. of L. leaders to reunion is based on the fact that reunion on equal terms would mean the end of their jobs. The two federations are roughly equal in membership, but an alliance between the C. I. O. and the cowed opposition within the A. F. of L. would be the final curtain of the Woll-Hutcheson-Frey clique and their mouthpiece, William Green. Lewis cannot be blamed for rejecting their offer to take back only the original C. I. O. unions, for this would leave the present A. F. of L. hierarchy in control of the reunited federation, and it would undoubtedly use that control to cut up the new C. I. O. unions into crafts. But Lewis knows that with a great war on, into which we may be drawn, continued division is disastrous. It would be worth the sacrifice of all but the industrial-union principle and democratic rights within the A. F. of L. to bring unity about. If Lewis cannot

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act, perhaps it would be best if the President stepped in.

Intervention by the President might well give opposition elements within the A. F. of L. the courage to speak up. Threats of jurisdictional reprisals have in the past frightened dissenters into silence; thus the democratic Brewery Workers' Union is in process of being "raided" by the dictatorial and racket-ridden Teamsters. The absence of democratic rights in most of the A. F. of L. unions has made it possible to postpone elections year after year, and to perpetuate the leaders in office by allowing them to hand-pick their own delegates. The A. F. of L. cannot keep jurisdictional peace in its own ranks, much less make peace with the C. I. O. The truce hastily patched up in the building trades last August under the threat of a C. I. O. invasion has already been broken several times. Under the surface, among the rank and file, there is a great deal of resentment. On the issue of the Wagner Act it mounted high enough to make itself felt at the conventions. Last year even hand-picked delegates greeted attacks on the Wagner Act with a loud silence; this year two international presidents rose on the floor to oppose amendments to the act. The task of restoring unity is the task of breaking through the hard shell of dictatorship and bureaucracy that imprisons the membership of the A. F. of L.

Barring effective intervention or some miracle, the stage is set for a fight without quarter. With a new anti-red drive under way, the C. I. O. made it clear that it will not join any witch-hunt. But the demotion of Harry Bridges from his post as director of the entire West Coast may be a warning that Lewis expects the left wing to "behave." The resignations of Frank Morrison and Frank Duffy, both decrepit ancients of the movement, have cleared the way for more vigorous representatives of ultra-conservatism on the council; Duffy is replaced by William Hutcheson of the Carpenters, Morrison by George Meany of the New York State Federation of Labor. Meany's elevation may be his reward for sabotaging the American Labor Party's attempt to enlist the A. F. of L. unions in New York. The Typographers, suspended for their unwillingness to pay anti-C. I. O. assessments, and the Brewery Workers, threatened with the loss of beer-truck drivers to the Teamsters, may shift over to the C. I. O. Both sides give the President's pleas for peace the cold shoulder, and the war goes on.

Dictated but Not Red

IN THE correspondence columns of this issue McAlister Coleman advises against jumping up and down on the Communists while they lie prostrate from their self-inflicted wounds. " 'Don't cheer, boys,' " he quotes, " 'the poor devils are dying.' " We haven't the least inclination to cheer, but something seems to be wrong in Mr. Coleman's picture. The "poor devils," far from expiring, are blandly administering extreme unction to everyone else within earshot and patronizingly explaining to them the error of their ways. Thus after a month of twisting and turning that would do honor to a corkscrew they coolly charge *The Nation* with "fumbling and confusion, a drifting with the tide of events that has necessitated a change of course from week to week." More in awe than in anger we leave the accusation to the verdict of others. Under the circumstances, however, we think it fair to recall to Editor Magil of the *New Masses*—it was he who spotted our "fumbling and confusion"—a few of the gems of contradiction that have lowered the "vanguard of the American working class" to the level of comic relief.

On August 25, after the Ribbentrop visit to Moscow had already been announced, Hitler stood revealed before Mr. Magil's colleagues on the *Daily Worker* "more clearly than ever before as an imperialist aggressor and warmaker threatening the independence of Poland immediately, as well as the position and national interest of England, France, and the United States." The "thing to watch for," warned the *New Masses* on August 29, "is a situation in which the Vatican or the Oslo powers, *or perhaps some other capitulator* [italics ours], may be persuaded to call some sort of conference . . . which Hitler would at first ridicule and then, having been assured of concessions, come into at the end and emerge as the victor." As for the strictly non-aggression pact then in the making between Germany and the U. S. S. R., "the people of Poland," said the *Daily Worker,* "realize the firm position of the Soviet Union in uncompromising support for their freedom and independence." What is more, "as they gather their strength to resist the fascist threats and to defend their national independence, this support will be continued and further strengthened." Of course the pact would have an escape clause which would free the Soviet Union from its terms should Germany attack a third nation. This, said the authoritative *Worker,* "is a basic clause of Soviet peace policy."

Then came the pact, to what should have been the humiliation of the *Worker,* which had previously declared: "The whispered lies to the effect that the Soviet Union will enter into a treaty of understanding with Nazi Germany are nothing but poison spread by the enemies of peace and democracy." And immediately on its signature came Germany's "attack on a third nation." The pact contained no loophole to take care of German aggression, but the editors of the *New Masses* patiently explained on September 5 that 'in truth it was naive to expect an escape clause."

What the Red Army did in support of Polish independence is now history, but what the American Communist press did is less familiar. First the land which Earl Browder, even two days after the German invasion,

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called on "all Communists to support" as the victim of unprovoked aggression became "a landlord state" and "a semi-fascist regime." The government whose "decision to divide up the big estates on the frontier among the poor peasants" had won the praise of the *New Masses* on August 2 was pilloried as "a bankrupt dictatorship of colonels and wealthy landowners" in the issue of October 10. By the same token the democracies suddenly became the "democracies" and worse; the appeasers of London became war-mongers the minute they stopped appeasing; and capitulation to Hitler, hitherto the nadir of depravity, became, now that it was urged on the Allies by Moscow, a basis for world peace—a peace, said the *New Masses* (October 10), which would "squelch every reactionary force that comes up from the sewers of capitalist life at the smell of blood."

This kind of thing could be continued endlessly. In September Churchill's "rising influence" was a "development of the British struggle against fascist aggression"; by October the *New Masses* found that Churchill's rejection of peace on Hitler's terms revealed "how sinister and thoroughgoing the war against Germany will become should Churchill come to the helm." On September 1 the "isolationists were out to knife the President's peace policy" by opposing his demand to "junk the present fake 'Neutrality Act.'" By October 6 the lifting of the embargo had become "an instrument for the furthering of the war aims of Wall Street finance and British imperialism," just as Coughlin, Fish, the Socialists, and the hated Trotskyists, all of whom the local Stalinists have long lumped together as tools of the "Munichers," had been saying for months—and still say.

But this is laboring a point. It is no wonder that the American comrades, observing the monstrous somersaults in *Pravda* and *Izvestia* and eternally obliged to follow the leader, are "fumbling and confused"—so confused, in fact, that they think others are doing the fumbling.

Of Books and Politics

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

SEVERAL readers have commented on Kenneth Crawford's review of "After Seven Years" and asked that *The Nation* supplement his criticism with some editorial estimate of Moley's performance. This modest public demand affords an excuse for a few remarks I have wanted to make about both the book and its reviewers. By and large I think Moley has been treated with a consideration that has weakened and falsified the appraisal of his work. In an effort to avoid the personal note so deafeningly sounded by the author, his critics have minimized what seems to me the book's most important aspect. Our reviewer wrote: "Some of the reviews of this book already in print take Moley to task for peddling the confidence of a White House intimate before the White House has changed hands. I am willing to pass over the question of propriety. Of course Moley has kissed once and told twice. But there was no attempt at deception about that. . . ." And then Mr. Crawford went on to an estimate of the factual value of the book, which he rates high, and of Moley's political philosophy, which he considers puerile. Arthur Krock, in a review printed in the New York *Times* on Sunday, October 1, used the same approach, though his political conclusions were different; he, too, washed his hands of any responsibility for passing judgment on the "morals" of Moley's performance. While one or two criticisms have expressed indignation, none that I have seen has examined the relationship between Moley's morals and manners and his facts and conclusions. But how can that relationship be ignored? Every recorded conversation, every event described, every charge made must be examined in the light of Moley's sparkling animus against Mr. Roosevelt. A man does not tell tales which expose to ridicule or blame another man to whom he has been bound by close ties of friendship unless he is moved by a desire to injure. This is obviously true in ordinary personal relationships. It is even more true when the object of the exposure holds a high public office; then each word becomes a political act as well as a personal injury, and an act against which the victim has no defense.

Moley is no innocent in the world of politics. He may not be as nearly omniscient as he would have his readers believe, but his book reveals a shrewd understanding of the art of political maneuver. One must conclude after reading it that he is a tattle-tale with a purpose—and a sure knowledge of the effect of every word set down. His facts and judgments must be assayed with this in mind.

Hermann Rauschning's book "The Revolution of Nihilism" has almost supplanted "Mein Kampf" as a textbook of Nazi philosophy and Nazi intentions. It is, for one thing, up to date, even though it was written last spring. Rauschning traces the growth among the leaders of the Third Reich of a fanatical determination to extend the area of Nazi domination without regard to political results. No extremes of external aggression or of revolutionary change within the regime are too violent to be acceptable in the pursuit of this end. Particularly pertinent is his discussion of Germany's relations with Russia. Many pages clamor to be quoted, but those which follow fairly summarize the most important points in Rauschning's analysis:

> The anti-Soviet policy of National Socialism seems so much a matter of established doctrine that a return to the old pro-alliance conception of the Reichswehr might

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seem impossible for the Third Reich. But, as I have frequently indicated, that is not so. The new Thirty Years' War in which we are engaged may, in spite of its supposed ideological character, become the war of permanent changes of front. And it may well be that, sooner or later, Germany will deliberately seek an alliance with Soviet Russia. . . .

In the spring of 1937, before the huge crop of executions in the Russian army, a number of provincial German newspapers were surprisingly busy with Russian events, which were being interpreted as revealing a new development of nationalism in the Bolshevik state, and its purging of Jewish elements and of doctrinaire revolutionists. There were full accounts of Stalinist anti-Semitism, and much was made of the alleged emergence of the authoritarian idea of a new czarism, together with a new nationalism. I do not know whether all this was a kite flown by the Propaganda Ministry or a gamble by other groups. But nobody who has had any insight into the elasticity of the unscrupulous power policy of the regime will have any doubt that a right-about turn in foreign policy would not be a matter of the slightest difficulty either for the Propaganda Ministry or for any of the masters of the completely muzzled German nation. . . . Apart from Rosenberg, there were few prominent members of the party who would not have preferred a Russian to the Polish pact. . . .

The Bolshevik leaders defended the strange plan of an association between the Soviet Union and Germany, in discussing it with members of their party, by arguing that it could only benefit the proletariat if capitalist, militarist Germany built up the indispensable armaments industry for the Soviet Union. But in 1933 any close alliance with Russia for aims of offense was only to be had at the price of a "second," a Socialist, revolution in Germany. I assume that Hitler recognized this, and that he considered that the time was not ripe for that revolution. Undoubtedly there are important military groups which would not shrink from it. For many of the younger generation of Nationalists there is no longer anything alarming about that perspective.

Hitler's aversion from an alliance with the Soviet Union is due, however, clearly to another consideration —that if the National Socialist methods of domination are, perhaps, the equal of the Bolshevik methods, they are in no way superior to them. A German-Russian alliance would certainly bring the danger of the conversion of a National Socialist into a Bolshevik hegemony. As yet Hitler has found no opponent who could stand up to his political methods. This gives him the sense he personally needs of absolute superiority. Soviet Russia would be as dangerous as a partner as it is as an enemy; it would be a partner immune to the wiles of National Socialism, as the bourgeois world is not.

The army was enthusiastically for the alliance, which offered the inestimable advantage of covering Germany's rear. It favored an alliance for practical reasons, just as the Western democracies are trying today to avoid the formation of ideological coalitions and are in favor of political collaboration with National Socialism, independently of any revolutionary consequences that might result in the event of war. The Reichswehr, similarly, is not deterred from accepting the practical advantages of an alliance by the risk of the revolutionary infection of Germany in war time.

Hitler was compelled by the political intrigues of the early years to trim his sails until he had full possession of power and could venture on a revolutionary course in internal politics. Now, however, with *Wehrwirtschaft* and *Autarkie* . . . the economic system and the social order have been largely approximated to the Bolshevik system—with, it is true, certain important exceptions. There are thus no difficulties left in the way of alliance with the Soviet Union. That alliance is the great revolutionary coup in foreign policy at which controlling elements in the National Socialist leadership have long been aiming. . . .

A German-Russian alliance means simply the confluence of two streams which run toward the same sea, the sea of world revolution. National Socialism will submit to *Gleichschaltung* with the Bolshevik world revolution, or will subject that revolution to *Gleichschaltung* with itself: it amounts either way to much the same thing. It will be no ordinary coalition between two powers for normal practical purposes. Germany and Russia, if they come together, will radically transform the world. That alliance is Hitler's great coming stroke.

CONTENTS

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 425
EDITORIAL:
BALTIC AND BLACK SEA 427
LABOR'S BOURBONS 428
DICTATED BUT NOT RED 429
OF BOOKS AND POLITICS by Freda Kirchwey 430
WAR BOOM OR BUST? by Eliot Janeway 432
REVOLUTION IN IDEAS by Max Lerner 435
THE BALKANS ARE NEXT by Jonathan Griffin 437
THE REAL HOUSING ISSUE by Charles Abrams 439
IN THE WIND 441
ISSUES AND MEN by Oswald Garrison Villard 442
BOOKS AND THE ARTS:
JUSTICE FRANKFURTER by I. F. Stone 443
THE DYER'S HAND by W. H. Auden 444
GERMAN VIEW OF BRITISH STRENGTH by Keith Hutchison 445
GERMANIC MADNESS by Frederick L. Schuman 446
ALDINGTON AGAIN by Louis B. Salomon 447
SHORTER NOTICES 447
DRAMA: GERTRUDE LAWRENCE TRIES HARD by Joseph Wood Krutch 448
RECORDS by B. H. Haggin 449

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War Boom or Bust?

BY ELIOT JANEWAY

DURING the ten painful, profitless years since 1929 many Americans have begun to fear that only a second World War would revitalize the American economy so that it could enjoy another period of expansion. The Second World War is now in its second month. So is the business spree it set off; industry in general is now producing at physical capacity. Perhaps the Second World War will not get anywhere as a World War; perhaps it will not even turn out to be a successful PWA project; in any case, the six-weeks-old business spree is already heading into an extremely unpleasant morning after.

The major economic growth of 1926-29, achieved mainly by private investment, is apparently not being duplicated. The young war recovery seems thus far to be simply a more violent repetition of the 1937 inventory boom—the only result of which was a twelve-month production shut-down while the surpluses accumulated through the miscalculations of business were worked off. Already several billions of dollars of previously idle funds have been put to work, but unfortunately nearly all of this money is being invested in the production of goods for inventory, "on spec."

War in Europe frightened American business men into buying everything in sight. They anticipated a boom in exports much greater than that of the last war, partly because this war is being fought by highly mechanized forces which consume more materials than armies ever did in the past. To guard against a domestic famine caused by the export of everything that could be shipped, they tried to beat the belligerents and one another to their suppliers' order books. Contrary to expectations, however, export consumption of our output since the outbreak of war has increased only a trifle. Domestic consumption had been inadequate to balance production at even its modest pre-war level. It has lagged pathetically behind the new rate of output since the war set our factories working at capacity.

More urgently needed than at any time since 1929 is the expansion of capital-goods activity by the investment of from five to ten billion dollars a year of new money. Only this kind of activity will create both outlets to absorb the heavy materials now being overproduced and purchasing power to absorb the consumer goods being warehoused at record speed. The accumulation of orders which sent production up to capacity will probably be worked off by the end of the year. Reorders to keep the production lines moving seem out of the question; in fact, many industries right now are threatened with cancelations from customers who have begun to fear that they have bought too much. The only hope of averting another inventory "recession" lies in a capital-goods revival.

True, private industries caught with inadequate, obsolete machinery have encouragingly been placing impressive orders for new capital goods. But it seems certain that the absorption of materials and the creation of buying power through this rise in private investment will be insufficient to forestall another recession in the first half of 1940. Government must be prepared to step in. Instead of yielding to the temptation of "not rocking the boat," of hoping to ride an indefinitely prolonged wave of prosperity, the New Deal must be ready with a whirlwind program of capital-goods investment—as the President is being told by those of his advisers whose pessimism in advance of previous calamities in part explains their influence with him. The problem is one of arithmetic; to new private investment enough government investment must be added to make the sum of new purchasing power balance the total of overproduction.

In the early days of 1939, when the problem was to counteract depression rather than to act swiftly to save a recovery, a satisfactory beginning of such an investment program had been prepared. This was embodied in the self-liquidating spending-lending bill and the housing bill, each designed to stimulate the depressed heavy industries. Thanks to the government, the building industry has been the one member of the capital-goods group enjoying a high rate of activity from June, 1938, on. During the early part of 1939 construction actually exceeded that in the corresponding part of 1937. But this was entirely due to government activity. Private construction was only half what it had been in 1937.

All this government construction work will end precipitately in the first half of 1940. The contribution of government deficits to purchasing power is also scheduled to decline sharply from its recent rate of over $3,500,000,000 a year. But only government building and government deficits have been keeping the economy alive during the protracted shut-down of capital-goods work—railroad equipment, utility equipment, factory construction, and the like.

Last summer we faced the threat that by the spring of 1940 the basic prop sustaining business activity safely above the recession level would collapse. This threat the New Deal's twin bills were meant to neutralize. The housing bill would have given a new lease on life to

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building activity, which had begun to taper off from the peak established earlier in 1939. And the spending-lending bill would have brought the railroad-equipment industry into action, a long step toward reemployment.

A surprising volume of support for the housing bill developed in business circles; a prominent Wall Street law firm, as counsel for certain building-material producers who could not afford to be ideological about "more New Deal spending," logically found itself lobbying for the bill. The most important part of the spending-lending bill, after Secretary Morgenthau consented to the deletion of its public-works provisions, was the rail-equipment section. This at first aroused considerable opposition from the railroads themselves; most of the managements opposed the bill on the ground that if they permitted the government to finance their buying of new equipment at 1 per cent, people would conclude they had allowed their existing equipment to become inefficient and obsolete.

Actually less than a month after the railroads aided the defeat of this bill, which would have helped to put them back on their feet, the war boom showed conclusively how inadequate their equipment had become: they went running to the RFC for $125,000,000, at 3 per cent, not 1 per cent, for emergency equipment orders, while industrial production all over the country was held up by their inability to keep deliveries at the same pace as output. Last summer, when car loadings were around 600,000 a week, the roads talked big about how much traffic they could handle. Some roads, in desperate need of new equipment and unable to obtain money in Wall Street, would have liked the idea of getting money from the government at 1 or 2 per cent, but American railroads are too well disciplined for any individual managements to buck the machine, and the machine apparently didn't want to know anything more than that the New Deal was trying to spend some more money. As a matter of fact, this rail-equipment financing would not have added a dime to the public debt if only because the railroads' fraction of modern equipment has always paid a return on the investment in it.

After a while, however, in spite of the railroads' Washington lobbyists, a certain number of influential and well-placed business men found out that the bill was designed to accomplish precisely what they had always claimed the New Deal prevented—the revival of the capital-goods industries. Support for the bill began to grow. Then two things happened. First, the question of supporting the bill was passed up to the high political powers in the business world, who have always regarded New Deal legislation on matters like the securities markets and the utilities as a personal insult. The reaction here was: "Lay off. Don't help these fellows out when they have only a year to go. After the next depression has licked them, we will come back in 1940 with a program very much like this."

The second event was more spectacular. In circles which had contributed heavily to the campaign funds of Representative O'Connor of New York and other targets of the 1938 purge, the feeling spread that Congress at last had Roosevelt on the run, that he could be licked for good if the spending-lending effort to avert a depression could be defeated. There sprang into action that hatchet gang informally known as the Owners' Association because each of its members claims to own and to be able to deliver the vote of various Senators and Representatives. The office of Senator Tydings, who had been lobbying to permit the derelict Baltimore and Ohio to give the runaround to its creditors — not least among them the RFC —became the center of much activity. Finally, that stalwart liberal, Senator Wheeler, to whom no government spending desired by the silver lobby has ever seemed extravagant, moved to throw out the entire bill. The "Owners' Association," more representative of money in general than of responsible industrial leaders in the heavy industries concerned, had Roosevelt down. Then war broke out in Europe. It let Roosevelt get up to fight another round.

Senator Wheeler

If the New Deal's bills had gone through, a cushion of assured capital-goods work would have been available to support business activity when the wave of inventory production peters out, when business men feel that they have stocked up against all contingencies and can afford to sit back and see how busy Europe really will keep the factories. No such cushion now exists. By January the nation's factories can look forward to something very much like a shut-down instead of a war boom. How much consuming power is needed can be measured by the vast degree of overproduction in the weeks since the war.

The most typical, and important, case is that of steel. The industry had drifted into the habit of selling in quantity only during price wars; this had cut deeply into its profit margins. During the June price war it had taken orders which would supply its larger customers into the first part of 1940. By August, releases for shipment of these orders were coming so slowly that the industry was overproducing at only 60 per cent of capacity.

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Then came the war and the boom. The troubles of overproduction were swept away. In the first week of the war steel orders from domestic customers anticipating a famine caused by exports totaled 7,000,000 tons, the second week equaled this, and the last two weeks of September swelled the order backlog to between 20,000,000 and 25,000,000 tons—enough to keep the industry producing at capacity until 1940. What were the actual exports which justified this unparalleled speculation? In the first week the total of actual orders for exports, plus hints, hopes, and feelers, was 250,000 tons. The second week's 7,000,000-ton buying was based on another 250,000 tons of export orders and inquiries: domestic consumers bought 14,000,000 tons to guard against an export famine caused by 500,000 tons of tangible and intangible export business. Before the month was out, the industry was chasing its tail. The British government, whose theoretical needs had in good part set off the spree, was actually inquiring for 200,000 tons. It inquired in district after district, at plant after plant. The mills were too busy with large orders to bother with exports. Then, at the end of September, buying fell away altogether. The delivery period had begun.

Two other basic industries, copper and oil, illustrate further the illusion of huge war exports. In August the oil industry suffered one of the most acute crises in its history. Under the pressure of uncontrollable surpluses a collapse occurred, first in prices, then in production. Crude-oil output stopped in six states. While this severe corrective process was still running its course, the war started. The industry's exports remained of marginal importance, since the Allies were not only well stocked but beginning to draw on their own colonial sources. No matter. Just as though an export boom had begun, prices and production reversed themselves. The country producing two-thirds of the world's oil was afraid of a shortage.

Copper producers too had been sorry for themselves all year. They had let their customers use steel buyers' tactics to hammer prices down and load up with supplies for months to come. July copper sales, slightly over 183,000 tons, set an all-time record, although the business was actually spread out thin over a number of months through orders for future delivery. On top of this inventory accumulation came the war fever. The July record was broken. So great was the demand that the producers went to the extraordinary lengths of refusing to sell to outside speculators and rationing their usual customers. But, again, none of this buying was for export, although the industry had been doing a pretty fair volume of export business before the war. As in the case of oil, the Allies were well stocked and relied on their colonial sources for additional supplies paid for in their own depreciated currencies. By October buyers were through.

Instead of accepting this, the industry put the price up; this had the desired effect of reviving speculative fears and precipitating another buying rush nearly as great as September's. But a significant commentary on the copper situation has been made by the ticker tape: in spite of all this record business, Anaconda is still selling for only $4 more than in the last pre-war week.

The most grotesque speculation of all occurred in the sick old cotton-textile industry, which has no export prospects no matter how long the war lasts. In the first week of the war orders totaled a billion yards—the largest week's business since 1920. This inventory buying occurred while the industry was curtailing production by 25 per cent in order to allow its customers to work off the record surpluses accumulated last spring. The textile boom was so obviously unhealthy that merchants began discouraging mills from trying to make prompt delivery.

There is one encouraging circumstance in this unbalanced boom—the rising volume of orders for new capital equipment. The railroads, caught so short of equipment that for once their spokesmen were apologetic, seem certain to spend well over $200,000,000 on emergency work alone before the year is out; if government financing on really attractive terms is forthcoming, they can multiply this several times over later on. The utilities, also caught short, have followed the railroads into the equipment market. Commonwealth and Southern has placed the most significant order, for a new generator in TVA territory. Altogether, utility investment in emergency plant may approximate $100,000,000 by January. But this is only scratching the surface. Throughout industry inadequate equipment is causing production bottlenecks. Steel mills have shut down because their blast furnaces could not give them all the iron they needed. Foundries, run down for ten years, are unable to serve their revived railroad market and their more faithful customers at the same time. Evidence of the emergency is seen in the fact that the country's machine-tool builders are sold out well into 1940 on rush orders.

But it is doubtful if all this emergency machinery buying will add up to much more than five or six hundred million of new investment money. Unquestionably, if the boom could be stabilized, much more would follow, a great deal more if government financing were forthcoming—with the government securing loans by mortgages on the new machinery. Also, if the war really starts using up material equipment, exports may attain more than their present marginal importance. But the volume of investment money needed, before January, to sustain production at even 10 per cent below its present level will be closer to $2,500,000,000 than $500,000,000. And the economy cannot wait until possible private demand brings about such investment. The government must add its support if private investment is to have a chance to continue in 1940.

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Revolution in Ideas

BY MAX LERNER

AMONG the intellectual exiles from Germany after Hitler's capture of power in 1933 was a keen political and legal theorist, Professor Hermann Kantorowicz. I sat in a seminar with him for a short time at the University in Exile, one of the many brilliant achievements in Alvin Johnson's crowded life. "You would not understand this perhaps," he said to us, "because you have not experienced it as we have in Germany. There is an important distinction between thoughts and ideas. Men possess thoughts but ideas possess men."

I shall not easily forget the impact of his remark and the illumination it carried. It was not that the distinction between the words "thoughts" and "ideas" meant much to me in itself. Let us rephrase the statement. Let us say we are dealing with the whole realm of what, for lack of a better term, we shall call ideas—the whole intellectual realm. One phase of it is the rational; and here men are in possession of the ideas, using them to clarify their world and subject it to order. The other phase is the irrational; and here the ideas—big sweeping ideas like racism, individualism, Nazism, communism, democracy—are in possession of men.

It is the recognition and exploitation of this possessive power of ideas that makes the genius of our age. The great intellectual revolution of the seventeenth century was the discovery of scientific method and its possibilities. That of the eighteenth century was the charting of the map of reason and the subjecting of social institutions to the test of rationality. That of the nineteenth century was the discovery of the world as process rather than as structure, with ascertainable laws of development both in the biological realm (Darwinism) and in the historical and social realm (Marxism). The intellectual revolution of the twentieth century is likely to prove the charting of the *terra incognita* of the irrational and the extraction of its implications for every area of human thought.

This is not the place for an extended discussion either of the new age of propaganda or of the discovery of the irrational. For the present purpose, both must be taken as given. What I want to emphasize here is how radically this has affected our intellectual orientation. It involves nothing short of a Copernican revolution in ideas. Many of us do not yet know it, because there is always a lag between intellectual change and our awareness of it; but it is nevertheless a fact that the rational, right-thinking man has as surely ceased to be considered the center of our intellectual system as the earth has ceased to be considered the center of our planetary system.

This is bound to play havoc with intellectual history as it has been traditionally written. There have been two principal traditions in intellectual history. One has been the history of ideas, viewed narrowly in a genteel Matthew Arnold sense as the best that has been thought and said by accredited spokesmen in the proper quarters, and written, after the manner of Deuteronomy, as a genealogical succession of schools of thought. The second has been the history of states of social consciousness, or what Whitehead and after him Carl Becker have called "climates of opinion."

To these must be added now a third approach—that of seeing the history of ideas as the expression of broad social and class forces. Taine used this approach in France in his studies of English literary history; Franz Mehring in his studies of German literature and especially in his "Lessing-Legende"; Harold Laski in England in his studies of the history of European political thought; and, in America, Charles Beard and Vernon Parrington in their analysis of American intellectual history. Some of these are Marxian in their emphasis; the others are only loosely related to the class interpretation. They have in common an interest in what Karl Mannheim, in his "Ideology and Utopia," has called the "unmasking" of ideologies. They view the history of thought as a succession of defensive and aggressive movements directed toward class and group interests and power relations. Their assumption is that both the intellectual apologies for a social order and the intellectual attacks upon it need to be recognized before we can lay bare the social impulsions behind the work of individual thinkers.

The great merit of this approach is that it goes beyond the rhetoric of ideas. It is not content to consider them at their face value, or to deal with them as in a pecuniary culture we deal with coins—so many counters of standardized value that have become ends in themselves. It deals with ideas as symbol-formations, half-revealing and half-concealing the real purposes beneath. It sees that the idea has meaning only in the dynamic context of a struggle over power and values.

But even after one has spelled out these merits, the approach still suffers from overrationalism. It concentrates on the thinker and the idea, and on the conscious or unconscious but none the less rational interests behind both. We shall have to shift our emphasis so as to include not only the conditions of the creation of ideas but also the conditions of their reception, not only the impulsions behind the ideas but also the uses to which they are put,

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not only the thinkers but also the popularizers, the propagandists, the opinion skill-groups, the final audience that believes or disbelieves and acts accordingly. This is, in a sense, a naturalistic approach. It follows through to the actual shapes the idea assumes in its various uses and transformations. For whatever may have been the personal intent or the biographical dilemmas of a thinker—an Adam Smith, an Emerson, a Nietzsche, a Lenin, a Spengler—we do not see his idea as a whole until we see the things that time and men have done to it. In the history of ideas even their distortions are part of their meaning—the unfolding of a line of direction inherent in the ideas themselves.

The Copernican revolution in intellectual history will not have borne fruit until we adopt a completely naturalistic approach to it. The meaning of an idea must be seen as the focus of four principal converging strains: the man and his biography; the intellectual tradition; the social context, or the age and its biography; the historical consequences of the idea, or the successive audiences that receive it. When we have grasped this we shall have grasped also the force of the irrational in the history of ideas, the role of propaganda as well as of individual creativeness, the role of instinctual drives as well as of logical formulations. We shall, in short, be viewing the idea not wishfully but with our eye on what happens to it.

But does this mean a surrender on our part to the force of the irrational? By no means. There is an enormous difference between the recognition of the role of the irrational and the glorification of it. It is our failure to make this distinction that has largely prevented us from making use of the new insights into the irrational. Liberals and democrats alike have striven hard to keep their skirts clean of any contamination from the irrational —lest by recognizing it they strengthen it and thus play into the fascists' hands. The result is that the term "ideologies," in the sense of systems of belief that serve to energize a culture and make it cohesive and give it a fighting strength, has come to have a meaning restricted to the fascist and communist countries.

I have little doubt that what will ultimately defeat fascism is its anti-scientific bias. The shape that ideas take is relative to the culture and era in which they develop and are used; yet there are internal standards of validity in ideas themselves. The sum of those internal standards is what, for lack of a better term, we call "science," although the philosophers may prefer to call it "truth." The notions we have about science and the methods we use for it will also vary, but the existence of scientific standards cannot be brushed aside either by skepticism or by state fiat. And a culture that sets itself against science by expelling its physicists and biologists and chemists, its doctors and its engineers, is not a culture that will survive. Not only will its armaments be defective and its synthetic products ultimately unusable; more important, that regard for fact and its validity upon which survival depends will inevitably wither away.

For some time we have believed that there was a sharp difference between nations with "ideologies" enforced by state power and those in which the state was ostensibly neutral and allowed a competition of ideas. Several things have happened to disabuse us of this notion. One is that we have come more and more to view democracy as an ideology. Another is the non-aggression pact recently signed by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. For we have come to see that just as we have had to manufacture an ideology for the purposes of power politics, so the totalitarian states have had to ignore their ideologies when power politics demanded a decent ideological ignorance. The discovery shocked most of us, not because we had underrated the force of power politics but because we had overrated the compulsion of ideologies. We had assumed that the Soviet Union would cleave to its doctrine or perish; and it has preferred to suspend its doctrine. We thought that Hitler's acts were governed by a fine ideological frenzy; and he turned out to be only a man governed by a desire for power so great that, as Hermann Rauschning has pointed out in "The Revolution of Nihilism," it admits of no other fixed principles. In the one case the survival of socialism in Russia seems to have been the imperative; in the other the principle of dynamism—of the ruthless conquest of power, with whatever allies, until Germany shall have established its hegemony over the world. The two imperatives are, of course, in the end irreconcilable; but before the end comes there may be several way-stations where they can still consort.

The cynicism that the German-Russian pact revealed is not limited to the Nazi and Soviet ruling groups. It characterizes every ruling élite, even in the democracies. It is instructive to recall the attitude of the élite toward the religion of emperor-worship in the Roman Empire as Gibbon describes it. The élite were sophisticated enough to be completely skeptical of it, yet they went through the forms because the demands of cohesion required that the underlying population should continue to believe. A similar dichotomy between the ruling groups and the masses is developing today in every culture. By this dichotomy the ruling groups deal with power politics and the masses are fed the proper ideas and given the minimum security. Nor is this true only of the totalitarian states. In the democracies as well statesmen are willing to betray ideologies: witness Chamberlain's fealty to Hitler at Berchtesgaden—the Canossa of our era; and the cynical scrapping of democratic Czechoslovakia at Munich in order to turn Hitler in the direction of the Soviet Union. And in the democracies, too, the ruling economic groups are skeptical of majority rule, making only the most necessary concessions to the masses.

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Is there, then, no real difference between the totalitarian states and the democracies in their attitude toward the use of ideas? Thus far the difference has not been clear. But it exists. The important difference is that between the *instrumental* approach to ideas and the *manipulative* approach. The instrumental approach recognizes that ideas are used in behalf of a way of life. It understands that, if democracy is to mean anything, it must have respect for the common man and not use him cynically as a pawn in the political game. The manipulative approach sees the common people only as so much material to be used. If you view ideas instrumentally, your primary regard is for their validity and for the creative action and the social cohesion that will result. If you view them manipulatively, your only regard is for the use you can make of them. They become instruments not for creativeness but for contrivance.

The discoveries we have made in the realm of the irrational are important in the struggle for democracy because they pose the task and condition its achievement. Democratic ideas will have validity not because of any moral perfection in themselves but because they fulfil men's needs for security, for stature, for participation in a cultural experience. This means economic change, and of a drastic nature. It means a change in educational procedures which will place the full force of our educational agencies—the school, the press, the radio, the movies—behind the achievement of a socialized democracy. It means the enrolment of new skill-groups, especially those of economic, legal, engineering, and labor technicians, in the government of industry. It means an affirmativeness in our pursuit of cultural goals which will convert our old democratic stereotypes into ideas winged with fire, to touch the imaginations of the young.

To pursue *Machtpolitik* as Hitler has been pursuing it means to be cynical of idea systems and contemptuous of the minds you are manipulating. This cynicism and contempt may seem for a time to go unpunished. But all the time they are destroying the only principle of cohesiveness a culture can have—the common people's belief in a way of life. When that crumbles, the culture crumbles. War and economic collapse will simply remove the outward props and reveal the inner disintegration.

Ideas are necessarily weapons. But they will be effective as weapons only if the uses to which they are put are life-affirming. If the craftsmen in ideas have a belief in the possibilities of human society and a sense of the dignity of ordinary people, that will be the best safeguard of those ultimate standards of validity that we call science and truth.

The Balkans Are Next

BY JONATHAN GRIFFIN

Belgrade-Bucharest, September 12-17

ON SEPTEMBER 3, 1939, in a small town of the Rumanian countryside, a crowd was listening to the radio in an outdoor coffee-house. The news came through that Great Britain had declared war against Germany. A peasant rose from his seat and made the sign of the cross. "Thank God," he said, "that the dishonor is wiped away. And now may God give them the victory." On the same day, in Belgrade, a Frenchwoman knocked down a man with her automobile. He was not badly hurt, but he had some cuts and his clothes were torn. As he was clearly a poor man, the woman offered him a thousand dinars in reparation. When she said she was French, however, he refused to take the money, exclaiming "Vive la France!" The crowd that had gathered took up the cry of "Vive la France!" When a policeman arrived, the injured man told him that he wished to make no claim and that the lady was French. The policeman at once shut up his notebook, saluted, and said "Vive la France!" And as the lady drove away, the crowd, the injured man, and the policeman waved her goodby and shouted "Vive la France!"

Those two incidents are not exceptional. In both Rumania and Yugoslavia, before the first week of this war ended, the government had to forbid, at Germany's request, all demonstrations in cinemas and listening to the radio in public places. In both these important and closely menaced countries the great majority of the people are against Hitler; they know very well that the victory of Great Britain and France is essential to the freedom of any small nation. And yet both Yugoslavia and Rumania remain, as I write this, neutral. Why?

There is, of course, the obvious reason that war is immeasurably risky and always destructive. Smaller nations find an additional reason for trying to keep out of a war between great powers in the fact that a small nation which takes the losing side may forfeit its very independence for centuries, while even a defeated great power cannot very well be kept down, as the last twenty years have shown. But Yugoslavia and Rumania have still other reasons for trying to keep out of this war. One is that the Poles are unpopular, chiefly because they stabbed the Czechs in the back in 1938. The psychological moment for resisting Hitler was September, 1938; at

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that time the Rumanian and Serbian peoples were ready without question to fight for a victim of aggression, but now they are full of fear and distrust. For a long time after Munich Mr. Roosevelt and the Chinese were the only foreigners who could awaken applause in the cinemas of Belgrade. Within an hour of the news that Britain was at war with Hitler demonstrations for the Western powers began in the streets. But this outburst of the old enthusiasm gave way to second thought and anxious waiting, to a morbid sensibility toward every fluctuation of the scanty news and legion rumors about the military operations. Many Rumanians and Serbs do not know why the Siegfried line cannot be pierced in a day, or why a British fleet cannot sail through the mine fields in the Baltic. The swift defeat of the Poles has given them a shock and laid them open to every whisper, from whatever source, that Britain and France are even now not serious about this war. One meets again and again people of all sorts who say that the Germans drop bombs, the English only leaflets. That Chamberlain is still in power nourishes the suspicions of these people. They are a fine field for German propaganda.

In both countries the governments, as well as the people, have many motives for trying to steer clear of war. First of all, of course, there are the two great questions: Will Italy stay neutral? And what will Russia do? Then there is the fear of sabotage, for both countries swarm with German agents and have German and other minorities. One factor in the Polish defeat was the quick action of German agents, who cut many of the communications as soon as war broke out. Against such sabotage the Rumanian government has been taking some precautions since German agents blew up several Rumanian bridges. But in the first week of the war it was induced to set up a large number of German schools in Bessarabia, and it is now under strong pressure to admit German technicians into key places. Nearly 200,000 of Rumania's Germans live in Bessarabia and Bukovina, close to the Russian and Polish frontiers.

In Yugoslavia, besides these dangers, there is still the Croat question, suspended rather than solved. The Serbo-Croat agreement was essential to national unity in a time of mortal danger and a real step toward democracy. But the Croats firmly believe that imminent war alone extracted it from the Serbs and that the Serbs would take back the concessions if they could. Dr. Machek threatened openly that if war came before agreement the Croats would take the opposite side to the Serbs, and he still makes it clear in conversation that he holds this threat in reserve. The Serbs resent these methods, the more so because in the last war they paid heavily in blood—670,000 casualties in a population of 4,000,000—for the liberation of the whole country. The Serbs of the opposition are especially bitter, because, although they have long worked for an agreement with the Croats, when the negotiations began, Dr. Machek rejected their help, preferring to win alone by exploiting the menace of Hitlerism—a method too much like that of the Slovak autonomists.

But perhaps the strongest motive for seeking neutrality, even at a high price, is the lack of armaments. The Yugoslav army, especially, is very short of up-to-date equipment, partly because its generals are old-fashioned, good at making their men fine fighters with the knife but not so good at getting them scientific weapons, and partly because Stoyadinovich would not arm the country against Nazi Germany. After Munich the Czechs offered Yugoslavia a great stock of up-to-date war material at reasonable prices, but the Yugoslavs dragged the negotiations out until March, 1939, when Hitler seized it all. Yugoslavia's own small war industry depends on Germany for repairs and replacements. But now the work of fortification is going on feverishly, especially against Hungary. Rumania's equipment is better, but the army is still short of aircraft, anti-aircraft guns, anti-tank guns, and tanks, as well as uniforms and boots. Rumania has some fortifications toward Hungary but none toward Russia and Poland.

To both Rumania and Yugoslavia, then, the swift collapse of Poland is a terrible portent. True, its cause was partly Polish conceit—the Poles would not disclose their needs to the French economic mission, would not let the French military mission go to the front, parked their airplanes and lorries in lines inviting bombs, neglected anti-tank devices in favor of mounted infantry, and relied on rain. And, true, Rumania and Yugoslavia would hardly repeat all these mistakes. But the fact remains that Germany was able to concentrate forces so weighty, well-organized, and murderously equipped that they overwhelmed and destroyed Poland, a large country with a great deal of equipment, before aid from the West could make itself felt. Without ordering general mobilization Yugoslavia has called up a good three-quarters of a million men, and Rumania nearly two million, many of these being concentrated on the Russian, Polish, and former Czechoslovak frontiers. How much either country could do to hold up a German *Blitzkrieg* is doubtful. Moreover, it is not known whether England and France are yet ready to send adequate aid, or what, meanwhile, Russia, Italy, or Turkey would do.

With these questions to face, no wonder the governments of Yugoslavia and Rumania have been receptive to Italy's diplomatic drive to form the Balkans into a neutral bloc. (This fits in also with the momentary rapprochement between Hungary and Rumania, and with the desire of some leading Serbs for a greater South Slav state that would include Bulgaria.) Italy's game has been fairly plain: the internal situation would not allow Mussolini to fight on Germany's side for an object so remote as Poland, but since his sympathies remained un-

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changed, he helped Germany by keeping the Balkan states neutral until Hitler should be free to turn against them or to the west; at the same time he has deprived the Western powers of any access to Germany except through the Siegfried line. Some say that Britain and France are not yet ready to support a Balkan ally promptly, in which case a temporary neutral bloc would help them rather than Hitler.

But is Hitler now likely to leave Rumania and Yugoslavia in peace until they have the backing for resistance? He will wait only if the threat to the Rhine is intense. Already Germany is pressing hard for economic control. For instance, the Bor copper mine in Yugoslavia is owned by French capital, but the Yugoslav government has the right to buy its whole output. This the Germans are believed to have demanded. (Yugoslavia is Europe's largest producer of copper, and officials in Belgrade think that a British air raid badly damaged the Stolberg mine near Wilhelmshaven.) Germany refuses to pay in cash, even at the outrageous rate of exchange obtained in June, and is reluctant to pay in goods. In the first week of the war the Germans held up a delivery of armaments for Yugoslavia, protesting at the same time because Belgrade impounded a large consignment of arms being sent through, under a false declaration, from Germany to Bulgaria. Desperately short of rolling-stock, the Germans have kept seventy Yugoslav freight cars, demanding meanwhile that the Yugoslavs send more goods to Germany in their own cars. The sales of Rumanian oil to Germany, though large, are also limited by the shortage of cars; a German delegation came to Bucharest on September 15 to speed up the working of the March trade agreement. Now that German and Russian troops have taken over Poland, and there is even talk of Turkey closing the Dardanelles to armed forces, the test may come in the Balkans any day.

The Real Housing Issue

BY CHARLES ABRAMS

WHEN Alfred Rheinstein resigned as chairman of the New York City Housing Authority with a blast that shook the foundations of every project from Williamsburg Houses in Brooklyn to Portrero Hill in San Francisco, he unwittingly loosened the pins under the whole housing movement. When the smoke clears, it will be seen that, without any great principle having been established, New York City has lost the services of a good builder and the cause of the slum dweller has been handed over to its enemies.

The real issues have become so confused that it is no longer easy to separate sense from nonsense. Even freedom of speech and federal Hitlerism have been dragged into the picture. Rheinstein had done a good job in cutting building costs; therefore everything else he stood for was taken to be right. New Deal papers joined with anti-New Deal papers in attacking Administrator Straus for provoking Rheinstein's resignation. It looked as if Straus had dealt a deathblow to the housing cause in New York, and it was suggested that he resign, too. Social agencies deplored the loss of the New York builder. A lament was even heard from the arch-enemy of the housing program in New York, the New York Real Estate Board—a lament that gave the incident a touch of suspicion and irony.

Directing the housing program, locally or nationally, has not been an easy job. Straus is the fifth federal official in five years who has tried it. Rheinstein's resignation is the second in New York in two years. In other parts of the country also, members of housing authorities have been reshuffled. For not only is the program novel, but there are few educational facilities to inform the public or to train personnel, and opinion is sharply divided on policy and procedure. Politicians already have begun to see that public housing offers opportunities to bail out slum landlords, hand over big building contracts, give jobs to the worthy, and capture an unfriendly political stronghold by filling it with more sympathetic voters. Whether the local authority is an autonomous body or a department of the city—the issue which forced the resignation of Rheinstein's predecessor in New York—is still an unsettled question. Tax exemption of projects, civil-service requirements, public letting of contracts are other problems still to be solved.

Straus is to blame for many things. He was misguided when he stood aloof from disputes too long, permitting half-baked opinions to crystallize. He may have felt that public controversies would prevent further Congressional appropriations, that the majority favoring his program in the House rested on a few uncertain votes which might be cast against it if public differences developed. But meanwhile he allowed Rheinstein to build something besides the Queensbridge and Red Hook projects—namely, a body of opinion supporting the purchase of expensive slum land and favoring projects for higher income groups than those whom Congress had intended to benefit. He compromised on principles when he should have fought, when the issue involved was not federal

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decentralization as claimed but adherence to Congressional intent. In his attempt to save the measure from conflict and possible defeat, he permitted the evolution of an oppositionist housing policy which has gained much public support, and which if adopted might deal a final blow to the housing program.

What are the real issues in this controversy? The question of the income groups to be rehoused is one. Rheinstein had first urged that the eligibles include families earning up to $1,923 annually, instead of the $1,399 of the federal limitation. He argued that projects would be like almshouses if rented to the lowest income group; that he would have to fill them almost wholly from relief cases; that New York City presented a special situation differing from other parts of the country; that there were deserving families with higher incomes who would be unjustly barred. Moreover, there weren't enough lowest-income applicants, he said, to fill Red Hook, and it would remain empty unless Straus's ruling were modified. The storm broke while Congress was debating the rule on the appropriation measure, and it struck fear in those who were fighting for the bill's passage in Washington. Why should Congress grant money to build more houses when in the city which exemplifies the slum problem people couldn't be found to fill those already built? But the New York chairman seemed to care little for the chances of the measure. He continued to charge that Straus had exceeded his powers in fixing the lower income limitation; the law, he insisted, simply said that, to be eligible, families must not have incomes more than five times the rent; any other conditions placed upon renting were in his opinion gratuitous and unwarranted. Rheinstein, of course, failed to realize that under the law dwellings may be rented only to the "lowest income group," and that the report which accompanied the federal housing bill referred to renting to "the lowest income group that can be reached . . . the lowest third . . . the $600 to $1,000 a year family groups who ought to be the beneficiaries of such a program." Straus had gone quite far enough in fixing the income limitation at $1,399. If he had allowed the projects to be used for the middle income group, and not just the lowest third, he would have not only endangered further appropriations but had to answer to Congress for exceeding his powers.

That Rheinstein couldn't find enough applicants to fill Red Hook has always seemed incredible, for two recent surveys disclose that more than 225,000 families of non-relief status in the city have incomes under $1,400. In fact, a handful of reporters for the New York *Post* found 500 eligible families in two days. When eligible families appeared so quickly, the New York chairman took a step of even greater importance to the housing program. He ruled out families which lived in tenements that did not violate the law. In other words, the six-story walk-up that covers 90 per cent of the lot area, with its foul odors, rats, and vermin, the tenement in which tuberculosis, crime, and infant mortality flourish, the tenement condemned by every city administration and by every state housing commission that has investigated it, had suddenly become a habitable dwelling simply by the addition of a few toilets and fire-retarding walls in the hallways. Though the death rate in the Brooklyn Navy Yard slum area was more than twice the borough rate and the tuberculosis rate in Harlem three times the city average, conditions could be remedied with a shot in the arm. Once this was done, there would no longer be any need for a housing program.

There was still another issue. Rheinstein contended that federal moneys should be used to buy up slum properties. Certainly this was the popular position. Straus had limited the price to be paid for land in New York to $1.50 a square foot. This barred the purchase of slum land unless the city paid the difference. Normally much can be said both for building on slum sites and for developing vacant land. For the first it can be urged that expensive city facilities already exist in these central areas, and that the best way to get rid of the slums is to tear them down. Advocates of using vacant sites say that projects can be planned better in outlying areas, and that the money saved on the land can be used for additional homes. Arguments will rage back and forth, but one thing is clear. Tearing down slum buildings might have been done in 1934, but during a housing shortage it is absurd to demolish occupied houses. This simply intensifies the shortage, drives the evicted tenants into still worse buildings, overcrowds them, and forces them to pay prohibitive rent increases. Rents near the Triborough Bridge rose more than 20 per cent when buildings were torn down to make way for the approach. In 1937 the threatened eviction of 4,000 families by savings banks which had acquired possession of houses not complying with the law caused a near panic. It forced a public investigation and the speedy enactment of a statute giving the banks six months' immunity from prosecution.

The situation has grown worse since 1937. Rheinstein's own survey admits that Manhattan apartments renting for $40 or less a month are only 3.1 per cent vacant; in three sections only from 1 to 2 per cent. No private construction boom, however great, can add to the supply of dwellings for slum families. They are completely removed from the sphere of private enterprise. Only public housing will build them. This situation is not confined to New York alone. With a sustained recovery and the undoubling of families, the present housing shortage might easily develop into a housing famine, as it did in the early twenties. Absorption of vacancies occurs rapidly once it is set in motion. In four selected New York areas the vacancy reduction was 46 per cent between March and October of 1936. A war boom may be the very development that will bring on the famine.

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We might look back for guidance to the post-war years 1918-23, when rents in thirty-two cities rose more than 52 per cent. If the public authorities continue to tear down available dwellings instead of adding to the supply, slum-dwellers can expect added hardship rather than relief. Congress authorized the administrator to defer slum-clearance operations if a shortage occurred. It prepared for the event. Yet when the shortage actually came, Rheinstein chose to ignore it.

Unfortunately, those who would destroy housing will reap advantage from the dispute. They were willing to accept it in 1934 when a recovery in building might prime the pump and pour profits back into the materials industries. But housing, they think, isn't needed today for this purpose. The war boom will do the trick. They want nothing that entails subsidy and taxation, not even homes for the underprivileged. "The Moor has done his duty, the Moor may go." If rents skyrocket and public projects aren't available, they have an answer. Rehabilitate the tenements. Patch them a bit here and there, give the owners tax exemption, and, presto, the housing problem is solved. The party is on again. The tenements may be with us for another hundred years.

The test will come in January when the next appropriation measure comes up for debate. It will then be decided whether housing is a temporary recovery measure, an experiment to be abandoned at the first sign of recovery, or a long-range program. Mr. Rheinstein made a contribution to public housing by saving millions of dollars through his building economies, but he may have innocently succeeded in losing for millions of people their right to a better way of life.

In the Wind

THIS IS the sad story of a staff man on one of the major radio networks. During one of the tense periods early this month he worked for twenty consecutive hours without a breathing-spell. When he was finally relieved, he staggered home and into bed. Half an hour later his phone rang insistently; he reluctantly answered it and heard a cheery, inquiring voice: "This is a representative of the Crosley Radio Company. We are making a survey of radio listeners. Could you tell me if your radio is on now and what station you're listening to?"

THE CHICAGO *TRIBUNE,* America's most red-conscious newspaper, is now voicing the suspicion that "Communists" were responsible for the Chicago fire. Admitting that the *Tribune* has always blamed the fire on Mrs. O'Leary's cow, the editorial reminds readers that a weekly magazine suggested in 1913 that Communists started the fire, that one of them had confessed as much, and that the whole story deserves fresh investigation.

DEPARTMENT OF UNDERSTATEMENT: "The International Goodwill Congress, which was to have met here November 10-13, has been called off until further notice because the arrangements committee said the European war would probably interfere with holding a worth-while meeting."—From the Milwaukee *Sentinel.*

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD, who is now in Germany, got this story from a friend in Yugoslavia. A Berlin broadcast, heard in Yugoslavia, reported that Mr. Villard had toured Europe, returned to New York, and written an article asserting that Britain was "groping in the dark." The broadcast was based on his article in *The Nation* describing war-time London at night and called London Blackout.

THERE'S STILL a minor mystery (plus several major ones) about Ribbentrop's first jaunt to Moscow. Where, ask diplomats and foreign correspondents, did the swastika flags decorating the aerodrome come from? The most plausible explanation advanced so far is that they were borrowed from the State Theater—which had used them for anti-Nazi plays.

DESPITE WIDESPREAD reports—including one published in this column—that Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath" would never reach the screen, the production is making rapid progress. And it isn't pulling any punches. That is what Steinbeck told his publishers recently when he visited New York. He revealed that he was much pleased by the film version and certain there wouldn't be any last-minute reversals.

EQUAL RIGHTS, ETC.: An Associated Press dispatch from Oak Grove, Louisiana, not widely published elsewhere, reported recently: "Roosevelt Johnson, twenty-eight-year-old Negro, was given the death penalty for *attempting to attack* a woman in one of six houses the state said he robbed near Oak Grove. Everette Miller, white, was given a life term for *attacking* a thirteen-year-old grammar-school girl at Epps, Louisiana." (Italics ours.)

IN HIS article in a recent *Saturday Evening Post* called I'll Sit This One Out, Milton Mayer relates that "ten years ago," when he was an undergraduate, "all the bright young men were taking the Oxford pledge." The pledge—not to go to war—was first formulated in 1933 in the Oxford Union and imitated here shortly afterward.

BOOSTING ITS annual drive for funds, the *Daily Worker* proudly displayed on its front page this letter to the editor from a woman reader: "I want you to know that there are two loves in my life—my husband Tony and the *Daily Worker.*"

IN PARIS it is rumored that as Hitler was passing through a devastated Polish town, a dog bit him. The French comment is: "Perhaps, but we're waiting to hear the dog's story." . . . London reports that an American tourist in Berlin asked an official how far away Rumania was. "About two incidents," the Nazi answered.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

London, September 28

PITY the head that wears the crown of Ireland—or rather him who holds the presidency. Other heads of small countries may look with envy upon Ireland's remoteness from the Nazis and its assurance that it will not be invaded by Hitler, but I do not believe that President De Valera thinks he is so much better off than the rulers of other small nations. It is true that he and his Parliament have announced the neutrality of Ireland. But that was merely the starting-point of his troubles. How to preserve that neutrality is going to bother him as long as the war lasts. For young Irishmen are volunteering for the British army by the thousands; the steamers that go irregularly from Ireland to England are full of them. And that fact incenses those who are hoping that if things go badly with England they will be able to "redeem" the north and drive the British troops there into the sea. De Valera's problem is to prevent the violation of Ireland's neutrality not only in favor of England, but also against it. Not that any Irishman wants to fight with or for Hitler. The Irish believe in democracy. But they want all Eire under one flag, and they want it with a passion that astounds the visitor who has perhaps thought that the many British concessions had finally satisfied them. It astounded me on my recent visit to Dublin.

Soon after the declaration of neutrality De Valera jailed a lot of revolutionists so that they would not make trouble. If it were possible for him to add to his unpopularity with the Irish Republican Army, the body which has been committing the bombing outrages in England, that would have done it. The extremists have long since forgotten everything that he did for Ireland in the early twenties and now have very much the same feeling for him that people are taught to have for Benedict Arnold or Judas Iscariot. They believe that he is actually playing the British game, notably by putting Simon-pure patriots in jail. Meanwhile, some of the English angrily contrast Eire's neutrality with the enthusiasm of New Zealand and Australia and Canada. Neutrality, moreover, makes it possible for the German minister, with his legation and consular officials, to remain in Dublin, in a most advantageous listening post; the British government might easily resent this, if the war were not largely conducted by wireless. Finally, though no Irish boy who has enlisted under the King can go back to Ireland to visit his parents while he is in uniform, English parents are pouring into Eire to place their children in school out of harm's way and perhaps to seek safety themselves.

To hold things down, De Valera has organized a special police force and called out the first line of the volunteers, or militia, to reinforce his small regular army—again not against a foreign foe but to head off revolution at home. How serious that danger is no one knows; few think it really serious. The feeling of large groups about the war can best be illustrated by this declaration of the Dublin Constituencies Council of the Labor Party: "The issue in the war is the supremacy of one bloc of great powers over the other. It is again the clash of conflicting imperialisms in which liberty, democracy, and the freedom of threatened small nations are but false catch cries to lure the workers and the common people into battle for their own destruction." The council then recorded its resolute opposition to "any participation in the war which is causing such misery, suffering, and torture to the workers of Europe." It asked for the prohibition of all English newspapers for the duration of the war to end their "poisonous propaganda" and also for the "non-admittance into Eire of any form of Nazi propaganda."

How will the Germans react to all this? So far, I believe, only one Irish ship has been sunk. It is obviously asking a good deal of a young submarine commander to be sure to sink Belfast ships and not Dublin and Cork ships. Some of the Irish mail ships have been suddenly transferred from the British to the Irish flag. Will Berlin object to this? During the last war England captured ships under the American flag because they had been German vessels. Curiously the British crews of these mail ships struck when the Irish flag was hoisted on them because they were British sailors and wanted to sail under their own flag and because under the Irish law their wives and dependents would not be compensated if they were injured or drowned. So far no German submarine has entered an Irish harbor to bother De Valera with the question of internment.

Today Eire acts both as if it were and were not in the war. It is blacking out its cities—why, if it is neutral?—has instituted a press censorship, and is building up an air-raid-precaution service. It is facing the same complete upsetting of its economic and industrial life as England and has instituted similar price-fixing. The London *Times* believes that Eire's neutrality has many advantages for England. Those men who wish to fight will fight and the Germans will have no excuse for intriguing in Ireland. It thinks, moreover, that the progress of the war will bring the two nations closer together.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Justice Frankfurter

LAW AND POLITICS. By Felix Frankfurter. Edited by Archibald MacLeish and E. F. Prichard, Jr. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH and E. F. Prichard, Jr., have performed no mere act of piety in collecting the scattered articles, editorials, and reviews which make up "Law and Politics." To adapt a phrase Justice Frankfurter used on another occasion, they help us to map his mind. The intellectual topography of any Supreme Court justice is of the greatest interest, for it may determine the course of our national development for years to come. It is particularly important in the case of one who promises to occupy a commanding place on the bench, for Frankfurter's first few opinions and dissents exhibit the clarity, bite, and perspective of a master, and demonstrate his right to stand in the line of succession that runs from Holmes through Brandeis and Cardozo. An earlier generation, using a term that has come to seem old-fashioned, might have referred to these jurists as the Holmes school in constitutional law. Though fear of Mr. Roosevelt has now driven most of our judges to enrol in it, Justice Frankfurter has older and more durable claims to membership. When, speaking for the court, he declined to permit an ingenious Oklahoma scheme designed to deprive most Negroes of the right to vote, one could hear the voice of Holmes in the decision: "The [Fifteenth] Amendment nullifies sophisticated as well as simple-minded modes of discrimination. It hits onerous procedural requirements . . . although the abstract right to vote may remain unrestricted as to race." The Frankfurter dissent in the Hetty Green Tax case has the same incisive and epigrammatic accents: "In the setting of modern circumstances, the inflexible doctrine of domicile—one man, one home—is in danger of becoming a social anachronism." Holmes would have approved the direct thrust of common sense in the Frankfurter decision upholding income taxes on judges: "To suggest that it makes inroads upon the independence of judges . . . by making them bear their aliquot share of the cost of maintaining the government is to trivialize the great historic experience on which the framers based the safeguards of Article III, Section 1. To subject them to a general tax is merely to recognize that judges are also citizens." Frankfurter's concurring opinion in *Graves* v. *New York,* discussing Marshall's "seductive cliché that the power to tax involves the power to destroy," will bear comparison with the best of Holmes, Brandeis, or Cardozo.

Essays on these three justices make up one section of "Law and Politics." They help us to understand Frankfurter's frame of reference and the school of thought from which he derives. The ideas of Holmes developed in the period and atmosphere which gave us Sumner's "Folkways" and the pragmatism of James. Distrust of absolutes in the law and an insistence on probing beneath the smooth surface of juristic utterance to hidden motivations characterize the Holmes approach. Frankfurter's essay on The Early Writings of O. W. Holmes, Jr., showed that Holmes expressed these characteristic ideas as early as 1879 in an article on "Common Carriers and the Common Law." Here Holmes found "the secret root from which the law draws all the juices of life" not in its logical formulations but in "considerations of what is expedient for the community concerned." Holmes developed a kind of psychoanalysis of the law which took on new importance in the 1890's when the philosophy of Justice Field came to dominate the Supreme Court. American capitalism sought to block social and economic reform by reading absolutist laissez faire conceptions into the Constitution, and disguised the smuggling as unavoidable obedience to a clear mandate of the Fathers. Holmes brought a corrosive skepticism to bear on the injunctions a Peckham or a Brewer claimed to read in the crystal ball of "due process." He undermined the myth on which the court depended for popular submission to unpopular decisions, the myth that it was enforcing the words of the Constitution rather than the majority's predilections. But if the application of the Constitution to specific cases was not a mere literacy test but an occasion for deciding questions of economic and social policy, there was no reason why judges should continue to meet the facts of life only in the back alleys of the unconscious. Brandeis's contribution was to bring the process into the open and provide the economic and social data on which alone a sound judgment could be reached. "Until his famous brief in *Muller* v. *Oregon,*" Frankfurter wrote in his essay on Mr. Justice Brandeis and the Constitution, "social legislation was supported before the courts largely *in vacuo*—as an abstract dialectic between 'liberty' and 'police power,' unrelated to a world of trusts and unions, of large-scale industry and all its implications." One should not overlook the difference in the conclusions drawn by the Holmes school from his basic premises, and those drawn by men of more radical bent. The latter sought to shear the court of its "usurped" powers; the former to educate judges in using these powers more wisely. One does not need to read the Frankfurter essay on the Supreme Court, reprinted here from the Enclycopaedia of the Social Sciences, to guess that he was as opposed to the Roosevelt plan to deal with the court's conservatism by dilution as he is to any other "mechanical device" to insure "the wise exercise" of the court's power. But it is also well to remember that all the profound wisdom and extraordinary persuasiveness of Holmes, Brandeis, and Cardozo were of no avail until in 1937 Mr. Roosevelt threatened to use the hairbrush. Nothing so enriches our constitutional law as a little well-timed contempt of court.

All the jurists of the Holmes school have had a natural talent for expression, but it is not entirely accident that they have made a contribution to American literature as well as to American law. Consciousness of their responsibility and their power lent majesty to their words. Harlan's manly anger often gave moving accents to his prose, but between

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Marshall and Holmes there is little for the anthologist in "U. S. Reports." Marshall, too, was fully conscious of the creative nature of his role. The highly sophisticated simplicity of Holmes and the jeweled utterance of Cardozo made high art of a form as crabbed and ungracious as the judicial decision. Brandeis's eloquence is not as celebrated, though there are passages in the Anita Whitney opinion and the Florida Chain Store Tax and Oklahoma Ice dissents that stir and inspire. The essays in "Law and Politics" show Frankfurter's comparable gifts as a writer. "The momentum of the court's influence," he says in one of his essays on Holmes, "has been achieved undramatically and imperceptibly, like the gradual growth of a coral reef, as the cumulative product of hundreds of cases. . . ." "Wise foreign relations," he writes in defending the untraveled Smith against the cosmopolitan Hoover in 1928, "require fundamentally not a body that has traveled, but a mind and spirit capable of traveling." In The Young Men Go to Washington he complains, "People talk glibly about 'principles of government' as though there were a pharmacopoeia of politics and economics to which one could go for prescriptions." "Under the deceptive slogan of 'economy,'" he protested in What We Confront in American Life, "too many comfortable people preach vicarious asceticism." Elia himself could not have bettered Frankfurter's mock despair in a review of Cardozo: "Deference for the well-known shyness of the author has held this review much too long in check. If Judge Cardozo will publish, he must suffer the pains of public appreciation."

"Law and Politics" displays Justice Frankfurter's capacities and intellectual origins. It also charts his political boundaries. He is no radical, certainly no Marxist; sometimes he is almost conservative, as in his weak defense of the Child Labor Tax decision. If part of him can soar into the philosophic empyrean with Holmes, part of him is safely anchored with the social worker: in explaining why he would vote for Smith he includes among the candidate's achievements as Governor "a comprehensive grappling with grade-crossing evils." He pays tribute to Herbert Croly's "Promise of American Life," and many of the selections in this volume were contributed to the *New Republic* Croly founded and Frankfurter helped to launch. If I may be forgiven for speaking of *The Nation's* weekly comrade-in-arms, the young men who started the *New Republic* were concerned not so much with influencing the masses as with influencing important men. They hoped to affect events by memorandum rather than by manifesto. There is a revealing passage in Frankfurter's Why I Shall Vote for La Follette. He says, "Nowhere does the university so permeate the life of a state as it does in Wisconsin. That is an achievement of which Senator La Follette was the guiding spirit. Probably no other man in public life today compares with La Follette *in the extent of his reliance on disinterested expertness in the solution of economic and social questions.*" (The italics are mine.) During and immediately after the war Frankfurter was chairman of the War Labor Policies Board and warned against the anti-radical hysteria in industry. "We must see these industrial difficulties," he wrote, "as a challenge to social engineering, to be grappled with as the medical and the physical sciences meet their problems." This emphasis on "disinterested expertness" and "social engineering" both describes and circumscribes. These are not the diagnoses of a drastic mind. It is well to remember that the Holmes skepticism of absolutes provided a defense against uncomfortable conclusions flowing from the newer dogmatism of Marx as well as a weapon against the older dogmatism of laissez faire. But distrust of absolutes was limited almost entirely to property rights. In the field of basic liberties strategy prevailed over philosophy and skepticism became too costly a luxury; for unlimited freedom of discussion was as important as limitation of property rights if a democratic society was to make peaceful adjustments to changing conditions. Here there was no indulgence in lofty but enervating perspectives, and The Case of Sacco and Vanzetti, reprinted in this volume, is a memorial to Frankfurter as fighter, the record of his fiercest test and proudest matriculation.

I. F. STONE

The Dyer's Hand

SHAKESPEARE. By Mark Van Doren. Henry Holt and Company. $3.

IF IT is true that life provides everyone with the material for one good book, it is also true that everyone has something worth while to say about the plays of Shakespeare. Any approach yields results: Percy Simpson can find employment for his scholarship, Wilson Knight for his interest in Christian symbols, Granville-Barker for his experience as a producer, Wyndham-Lewis and D. H. Lawrence for their peculiar theories of life.

Of them all, the apparently easy approach of simple appreciation is really the most difficult; it requires both humility and courage, the humility to read the text without preconceived ideas of what is to be found and the courage to speak without caring whether one is being clever or original. Without these virtues appreciation is painfully embarrassing to read; well done it can be most rewarding, and Professor Van Doren, like Dr. Johnson before him—almost the only critic whom he quotes—does it very well. As in his book on Dryden, Professor Van Doren says nothing without quoting the text in support; in fact, he tells us nothing that we could not have found out for ourselves, or that, once he has pointed it out to us, we do not feel we must always have known. But the fact remains that we did not: Professor Van Doren enlightens us, not because he has any special knowledge or private advantages, but because his love of Shakespeare has been greater than our own.

The works of Shakespeare are the man; he is the only one of the great European figures of which this can be said. Leonardo left off painting the Mona Lisa to study engineering, Goethe could put aside "Faust" to take part in local government, Tolstoy rejected his own novels on moral grounds. One cannot imagine Shakespeare doing any of these things. Even in Dante one feels an interest in philosophy and history that is separable from his interest in their poetic expression. But in Shakespeare poetry and life are one. If we do not like poetry, he can mean nothing to us whatsoever. In the true sense of the word "pure," he is the purest poet who ever lived; that is to say, he explored all life through a single medium, that of language.

His range of curiosity was unlimited, but he confined

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himself to one mode of understanding, the poetic. All the other ways of organizing experience, philosophical belief, or scientific research he never touched and gave no sign of wishing to touch. The dyer's hand was completely immersed in what it worked in. Such a thorough specialization always bears with it the temptation to write "pure" poetry in the false sense, that is, to use language to explore not life but itself, to commit verbal incest. But as Professor Van Doren points out, Shakespeare was aware of this temptation and exposed it finally in "Richard II."

Other great men, like Leonardo and Goethe, have equaled him in their curiosity; other poets, like Dryden and Pope, have equaled him in their exclusive passion for poetic expression; but his combination of curiosity and gift is unique. To find a parallel one must go to music, to Mozart or Wagner.

Like every genius he took good care to be born in the right place and at the right time for the work he had to do. No other country in sixteenth-century Europe had a language as suitable for poetry as had England; at no other time in English history has there been a large-scale poetic form, like that of the Elizabethan drama, which by its nature kept poetry applied to life, encouraged it to explore the widest possible field of experience, and protected it from literary auto-intoxication. Had Shakespeare been born a Frenchman, he could hardly have written better than Racine; had he lived in the eighteenth century, his range could hardly have been wider or deeper than Pope's; and had he lived at the end of the nineteenth century, he might well have lost confidence in poetry altogether and abandoned it like Rimbaud.

No luck is perfect. Writing for a theatrical company had its limitations. Extraordinary as was his capacity to work wonders with unpromising or shoddy material, there are at least two cases, "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and "All's Well That Ends Well," of subjects with which he could do nothing.

And genius is rarely as artistically successful as talent. Had his range and power of expression been less, he would have been a better writer for the theater. In "Troilus and Cressida" and "Measure for Measure," for example, what he is interested in expressing, the vastness of human corruption, is a lyrical not a dramatic theme, and is more than the plots or the characters can bear. In "The Merchant of Venice" and "The Taming of the Shrew"—Professor Van Doren's verdict on the latter is the only one of his with which I disagree—the power of his language to arouse emotion transforms a harmless comedy about a dirty old Jew and a roaring farce about a tomboy into something serious, ugly, and intolerable.

For all his mastery of "theater," no performance of a Shakespeare play can ever give us the dramatic illusion that we are watching real people: we are always acutely aware that we are watching actors clumsily scrambling after a life far out of their reach. Indeed, no other dramatist can so convince us that actors are an inferior race of being. Just as the purest poet is the greatest enemy of "pure poetry," so the most skilful dramatist is the greatest enemy of "the stage."

Yet upon anyone who is capable of reading or hearing English poetry Shakespeare always makes the same impression, an impression summed up by Professor Van Doren in his introduction as well as in anything I have ever read:

> While we read a play of Shakespeare's we are in it. He conditions us to a particular world before we are aware that it exists; then he absorbs us in its particulars. The great world is not forgotten, but it is here confined to a single mode of its being. He is not telling the whole truth in any play, but the piece of truth with which he is occupied at a given moment is for the moment eloquent both of itself and of the remainder. The world is not there, but this part of it is so entirely there that we miss nothing. . . . The reader who places himself in his hands will not be protected from any experience, but he will be safe from outrage because he will always know his bearings. What is supposed to happen in Shakespeare's plays does happen; and what has happened anywhere cannot be finally hated. Shakespeare loves the world as it is.

W. H. AUDEN

German View of British Strength

HOW STRONG IS BRITAIN? By C. E. Count Puckler. Veritas Press. $2.50.

WHEN the translation of this book, published in Germany early this year, appeared in England it was hailed by competent critics as well-balanced, accurate, and objective, and these adjectives are not undeserved. Count Puckler is a German newspaperman who for many years has been a correspondent in London. Such a job implies conformity to the Nazi creed, and this book makes several formal obeisances to the Führer and his achievements. But it is doubtful if the Count is a Nazi at heart, and it seems that his real purpose is to warn his fellow-countrymen that the British lion has not become paralyzed and cannot be safely provoked beyond a certain point—a theme most uncongenial to von Ribbentrop.

In considering the strength of Britain the author rightly gives foremost place to the economic factors. He reviews briefly the state of industry, agriculture, and shipping, and manages to cover most of the essential points. His views on agriculture are, perhaps inevitably, tinged with German romanticism about the soil. He does not fully appreciate the fact that Britain's willingness to forgo self-sufficiency and buy food in the cheapest market has produced economic advantages which certainly outweigh the strategical disadvantage of war-time dependence on imports. Count Puckler, also, is sufficiently bemused by German racial "science" to believe that agriculture is "a source of biological strength" and that Britain is suffering from diminished supplies of "fresh and healthy blood from the rural areas." I imagine most biologists would agree that a well-fed city child makes just as good human material as a well-fed country child and possibly better owing to the lessened chances of inbreeding in an urban environment.

One of the most interesting chapters in this book is that devoted to "the fifth pillar" of the British economic system—foreign investments. Count Puckler emphasizes the importance of this factor both in peace, when the annual stream of interest and dividends permits the nation to consume more than it produces, and in war, when the principal provides a financial reserve which can be turned into goods. He points out, however, that today only the United States is in a position to facilitate this alchemy, and in the event of American unwillingness or inability to assist the liquidation of British foreign

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investments, the value of those investments would become problematical.

In any case, Count Puckler believes, Britain's era of overseas accumulation is ended. The drain made on foreign resources in the last war was largely replaced in the twenties. But since 1930 the British balance of payments has been adverse in most years, with the result that the country has been living on capital even in peace time. Apart from this, the author suggests, the growth of self-sufficiency on the Nazi model will block the foreign-investment channels through which Britain derived so much wealth. It does not seem to occur to him that autarchy is even more likely to recoil on the heads of its practitioners.

Count Puckler concludes that even though its economic strength may be at the beginning of a decline, Great Britain is still the richest country in the world, with a war potential, taking the dominions into account, probably greater than in 1914. But Britain's economy is essentially international—it must earn money abroad: "that is the categorical imperative of British foreign policy." In view of the necessity of peaceful trading relations with other nations Britain is "particularly dependent on world public opinion in her actions." Consequently British power can only be exerted on occasions when its use seems ethical not only in the eyes of the British people but in those of the world at large. Nor would propaganda to camouflage an unethical purpose be of more than limited use because of "the decency of the overwhelming majority of the British people" and the critical judgment of the dominions and the world at large. "It follows from this moral check on Great Britain's foreign policy," writes Count Puckler, "that no country in the world has anything to fear from her, no matter how strong she may be, providing its own foreign policy is as strictly ethical as Great Britain's is compelled by circumstances to be." This conclusion must sound positively treasonable in Germany today.

There are one or two errors in this book worth correcting. The population of New Zealand is one and a half millions, not half a million as stated; the great new steel works at Corby are not in Lincolnshire but much farther inland in Northamptonshire; London's architecturally undistinguished but busy Stock Exchange is not the same thing as the purely ornamental Royal Exchange.

KEITH HUTCHISON

Germanic Madness

GERMANY RAMPANT. By Ernest Hambloch. Carrick and Evans. $2.50.

THE NEW GERMAN EMPIRE. By Franz Borkenau. The Viking Press. $2.

THAT *Deutschland* has been divinely appointed to rule the planet has long been an article of faith among pan-German patriots. Wotan has replaced Jehovah as Germany's heavenly benefactor, but the gift from the gods remains the same. The new imperialists at Berlin have so far outshouted their predecessors of the Second Reich in professing their destiny that the task of Allied war propagandists has been simplified. Nazi deeds and utterances speak for themselves. The last Kaiser occasionally conceded to other peoples the privilege of independent existence. The first Führer in his more candid moments has displayed no such weakness. To rule or ruin all the Western world has been his acknowledged aim. "Today we have conquered Germany; tomorrow the world is ours!"

The Anglo-French appeasers of yesterday have brought incalculable tragedy to their peoples by their refusal to recognize Nazi objectives. A host of more astute and more honest observers of the German scene, however, have long since insisted upon the inevitability of Hitler's resort to the sword to strike down all who might stand in the path of the Teutonic march toward mastery of the earth.

The nature and sources of the German national obsession are in part uncovered by these two volumes published on the eve of war. Ernest Hambloch, former member of the British consular service and correspondent for the London *Times*, completed his "Study in Economic Militarism" shortly after Munich. His thesis is that Nazi dreams of world conquest "must be considered as part of a national impulse with its roots in German tradition." He surveys pan-Germanism from Arminius to Hitler with brilliant insight and broad historical perspective. His juxtaposition of the Nazi credo and the swashbuckling utterances of the Lord's anointed prior to 1914 will startle those whose memories are short. "The Germany of today is only too true to her past—too true to be good." His suggestive interpretations of German folk psychology place in sharp focus what has been, what is, and what will be in the renewed assault of *Kultur* upon Western culture. And even as Chamberlain brought "peace with honor" back from the Reich, Hambloch wrote: "Today there seems to be little of care and less of calculation in British foreign policy, so that there is small likelihood that German hegemony can be arrested except by a Greater War with a Greater Germany."

Yet an indictment of a whole people is an uncritical acceptance of the Nazi gospel that Hitler is Germany. If Hitlerian foreign policy recalls and transcends Hohenzollern foreign policy, the similarity assuredly flows from the fact that now as then Junkers and plutocrats constitute the élite of German society. These landed and moneyed lords of the Reich are ever driven by interest and ambition to militant imperialism. The class basis of German aggression is hinted at by Hambloch. One would expect it to be developed incisively by a Marxist commentator. Franz Borkenau, erstwhile German Communist, does indeed seek to interpret the Nazi crusade in class terms, but the fogginess which characterized his earlier work on the Communist International reappears in "The New German Empire." His chapters are useful surveys of Nazi ambitions in Europe, Africa, and Latin America. He skilfully plays upon the theme that "the Nazis have adopted the Communist concept of conquering the world through revolution." Yet he misses the significance of Hitler's renunciation last March of Rosenberg's Ukrainian program. And he throws little new light on the economic and social roots of the *Furor Teutonicus.*

Germans in the mass are doubtless more docile, more gullible, and more addicted to *Schwärmerei* than other Western peoples. But their present psychosis, like the Hohenzollern delirium, is less a product of mass perversity than of class insecurity. No cure is likely until Junkers, industrialists,

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and the neurotic *Kleinbürgertum* are alike excised from the German body politic. If the West defeats Hitler, his new friends in the Kremlin may be counted upon to help perform this necessary surgical operation. If not, the bitter words of Haile Selassie, abandoned in his hour of need, may become prophetic: "The West will perish."

FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN

Aldington Again

REJECTED GUEST. By Richard Aldington. The Viking Press. $2.50.

LONG ago Richard Aldington was deeply hurt and disillusioned by life (you can read all about it in his poem "Childhood"), so deeply that he said he would never have a child, never bring a human being into the world to have it shut up like a chrysalis in a matchbox. (*N. B.* The biographical note on the dust-cover of his new novel states that he recently took up permanent residence in this country "with his wife and infant daughter.") Anyway, after writing a great deal of exquisitely sensitive poetry, mostly in the imagist mode, he turned to writing novels about the World War, in which he took part, and the post-war generation, novels that tried to conceal the real depth of the hurt under a veneer of hard-boiled cynicism. In "Death of a Hero," "The Colonel's Daughter," and "All Men Are Enemies" the veneer is laid on so thickly, the author has so often gone so far out of his way to say the derisive thing, to insert the blasé commentary, that I have always felt he was trying to hide perhaps even from himself the poetic idealism which the present-day world might brand as softness.

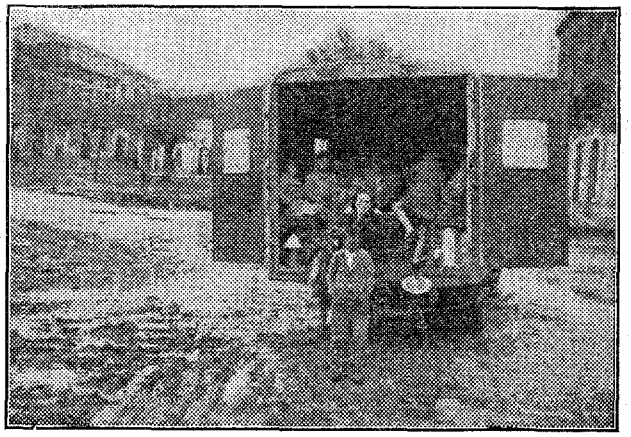
The new novel, "Rejected Guest," merely confirms that impression. It is the story of the illegitimate, posthumous son of an English officer killed in the war, of his soul-bruising collisions—like a chrysalis in a matchbox—with poverty, middle-class smugness, aristocratic snobbishness, and plain unadorned selfishness. And even though it positively glitters under a coating of raillery at things in general, of clever asides that serve as pin-pricks to burst any bubble of romanticism that threatens to materialize, I still get the impression that Aldington's mockery is a part of his losing fight to suppress his inherent poetic idealism, which, if he let himself go, might move him to write an idyl, as he came dangerously close to doing in "All Men Are Enemies"—or might prompt him to try to change this sorry scheme of things entire, which his reason tells him would be childish and futile.

LOUIS B. SALOMON

Shorter Notices

AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By A. A. Milne. E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.

For over thirty years the initials A. A. M. have stood for the best that was to be had in British whimsy for adults and children, in verse and prose. If it is the conventional thing to say that Stevenson's mantle fell on Barrie, then Milne (who is only partly Scottish) wrapped part of that well-worn garment round himself even before Barrie had ceased



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to wear it. Now, succumbing to the current autobiographical mode, he tells how it all came about; how "When We Were Very Young" resulted virtually from the boredom of a summer house-party, bringing "Winnie-the-Pooh" and "Now We Are Six" in its wake, all three leaving Dorothy Parker not very much amused and Mr. Milne a little annoyed at her way of not being amused. He tells how "The Boy Comes Home" won unexpected success, how "Mr. Pim Passes By" and "The Dover Road" developed from the chrysalis of a vague idea to delightful stage hits; he tells enough of his war experiences to show why he wrote that serious-minded but rather ineffectual tract, "Peace with Honor." In short, he does what most writers do when they write their life-story: he leads you on from page to page with the will-o'-the-wisp expectation that he will reveal the secret of it all, the light that never was on sea or land, and when you finish the last paragraph and turn the page, rather surprised to find that there is no more, you realize that he has told all and revealed nothing. At least Milne does it charmingly, light-heartedly, obviously having fun all the way himself. In fact, he says writing has always been fun to him, for the simple reason that the sort of thing he likes to write has been eminently salable, and he has not had to go around trying to express somebody else's personality, use somebody else's style. If you are a Milne fan already, you will enjoy this; if not, you probably won't.

THE LIFE OF S. T. COLERIDGE: THE EARLY YEARS. By Lawrence Hanson. Oxford University Press. $6.

This opening volume of Mr. Hanson's projected complete biography takes Coleridge through childhood, the Cambridge period, Pantisocracy, the early years of marriage, the *Watchman,* his friendship with Wordsworth as far as "Lyrical Ballads" and the first German tour, the journalism for Stuart, and brings him to the important decision, in 1800, to leave Poole and Stowey in order to settle in the north at Greta Hall, near the Wordsworths. In thoroughness and general excellence no previous work can compare with it. Mr. Hanson possesses the tolerant, sympathetic understanding that his predecessors have so conspicuously lacked; his learning, his enthusiasm, and his common sense are equally remarkable. His account of the substance and progress of Coleridge's ideas is as sound as his whole view of the subject's character. If he is anywhere deficient, it is in literary judgment; some of his statements about the poems are exaggerated or simply untrue, as when he claims for Coleridge an accuracy in the minutiae of natural description that is to be found only in Clare and Hopkins. But this failure in the book is more than compensated for by a fine study of the young Wordsworth and the best existing analysis of the influence the two men exerted on each other's poetry and critical theories, which ought entirely to correct the usual false view that it was Coleridge who benefited most from the relationship.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY. By W. Somerset Maugham. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50

Mr. Maugham is not at his best in this journal of young Charley Mason's week in Paris. The son of a well-to-do English middle-class family, Charley has already outgrown his early dilettante artistic leanings and is about to settle down into a safe, respectable niche in the real-estate business; but in Paris he meets two people who educate him in the facts of life in an entirely different way from the one he had intended, who in fact knock the bottom out of his world. The first is his old friend Simon Fenimore, now turned ascetic and bent fanatically on the resurrection of mankind through dictatorship; the other is Lydia Berger, wife of a convicted murderer, now earning her daily bread in a bordello, who spends the week with Charley at his hotel—quite platonically. Between the two of them he learns a good many things about life and art that he has never even suspected before, but he learns it entirely by hearing them talk, and when they start talking they knock off several pages at a clip, take a deep breath and dive right in again: speeches that are virtually little stories in themselves and sound much too theatrical to be convincing. Poor Charley's holiday turns out to be a course of lectures interspersed with practical observations; and it is his ironic fate to go back home looking rather peaked from the mental strain of it all, and to have his parents owlishly twit him with the dissipation which they assume he has indulged in, and which he wishes only too heartily that he had.

DRAMA

Gertrude Lawrence Tries Hard

THE new comedy called "Skylark" is apparently a success at the Morosco's box office. That fact, I presume, is not likely to be regarded with indifference by either Samson Raphaelson, the author, or Gertrude Lawrence, the star, but neither the one nor the other can have much further reason for satisfaction since the play is a sleazy affair and the performance a mere bag of tricks. Perhaps Miss Lawrence does as well as she or anyone else could do with a character which is convincing neither as art nor as artifice, but there is never a moment when one forgets that she is a popular actress behaving as she is expected to behave. She is, successively, arch, impulsive, tearful, and yielding. She trips back and forth over the stage, dangles her legs over chairs, and lies stomach down on the floor. She is also continuously "cute." But the succession of attitudes and moods does not add up to anything except a display of Miss Lawrence's known repertory.

If the star has done much better on previous occasions, so too has the author. In "Accent on Youth" he started out with a comic idea which was rather fresh as well as thoroughly sound, and the result was a crisp little play. This time he starts out with one of the most familiar of stories—the successful man who becomes so absorbed in his work that he is in danger of losing his wife—and gives it no new twists which are not too obviously just that and nothing more. Tony Kenyon, it seems, promised to give up his job as a big advertising man when his wife demanded that he and she should have more fun in life or call it quits. But Tony doesn't really mean to do anything of the sort. He

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means only to pretend to fall in with her ideas until she wants something badly enough to send him back to work. Naturally when she finds out what the real state of affairs is she is furious. But two minutes before the curtain goes down she makes a happy discovery. If her husband was willing to lie to her, that's proof enough that love was not dead. A new job, bigger and better than the old one, is already in the offing. Tony will try to remember to be more attentive in the future, and they will live happily ever after —eating their cake and having it too.

If "Skylark" had been written as a highly cynical farce-comedy which moved in a circle and ended on the implication "this is where we came in," it might have seemed passable at least. As a matter of fact, there are actually several purely satiric scenes which are penetrating and funny. But the dominant mood is one of rather gaudy sentiment, and we are asked to take it as some sort of happy solution for one of the problems of marriage in a world where "business" sets the tune. "Skylark" was first a serial in the *Saturday Evening Post* and then a novel in book form before it became a vehicle for Gertrude Lawrence. One gets the impression that the author has tried to adapt it to so many different requirements and to flatter the prejudices of so many different audiences that he has ended by forgetting whatever his original intention may have been. Donald Cook is suave and colorless as the husband; Glenn Anders does better than anyone else I can think of could have done with the inevitable role of tempter in this very much disturbed Eden.

The most striking thing about a theatrical season as slow to get under way as a world war is the fact that audiences are hungrily consuming their very scanty fare, and I am sorry to have to report that the popularity of the "Straw Hat Revue" (Ambassador Theater) seems to me explicable only in the light of this situation. It is a sort of secular "Pins and Needles" and, in my opinion, pretty dull except for one brilliant imitation of Carmen Miranda by Imogene Coca. Nevertheless, the fact remains that audiences like it.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

RECORDS

SZIGETI and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra under Munch have recorded for Columbia a superb performance of Bloch's Violin Concerto (M-380, $6), his most recent work, and one that is characteristic in feeling and idiom, in its brooding introspection and passionate intensity. Bloch is like other artists who constantly work out new embodiments of essentially the same emotion in the same idiom; but his music more than any other requires the repeated hearings that reveal distinctions between things which at first appear to be the same—distinctions which in a single work make the structure clear.

The Milstein-Balsam set of Mozart's Sonata K.296 for violin and piano (X-143, $3.50) is not as good as the recent one of Beethoven's Opus 30 No. 3. I have the impression that the two artists played with the same excellence of style

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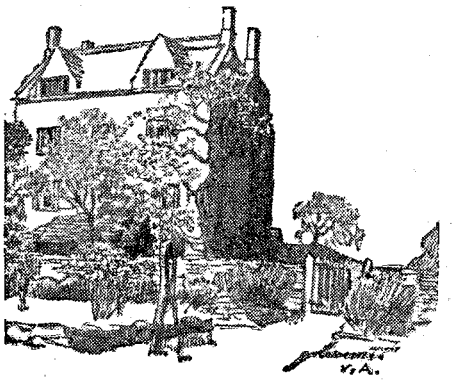

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and ensemble, and that it was the placing of the microphones that causes Balsam's playing to sound too delicate and some of the piano's delightful passages to be obscured by the violin.

Two superb Columbia orchestral recordings are Beecham's of music from "Carmen" (X-144, $3.50) and Weingartner's of Handel's Concerto Grosso No. 5 (X-142, $3.50), both made with the London Philharmonic. The orchestral excerpts from Lully's operas recorded by the Paris Symphony under Cauchie (M 376, $2.50) are not very interesting. But "Les Éolides" is a work delicately wrought in Franck's subtle idiom—a work, then, free of the occasional Franckian bombast, thought not free of the Franckian repetitiousness; and it provides the occasion for one of the better Barlow performances with the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony (X-145, $3.50).

Chopin's great Sonata Opus 35, which has waited long for an adequate recording, will have to wait longer; for Kilenyi gives us the first movement pulled now this way now that by "interpretation" which obscures its shape and significance —and this for lack of the ability to phrase a simple melody in the second movement effectively (M-378, $5). On a single record (69688-D, $1.50) are two of Liszt's salon pieces, the "Valse oubliée" No. 1 and "Consolation" No. 3, done in elegant salon style by Emil Sauer. And two other singles offer an impressive Fantasia of Purcell well recorded by the Pasquier Trio, with some undistinguished Haydn on the reverse side (P-69687-D, $1.50); and the lovely "Adieu des bergers" from Berlioz's "L'enfance du Christ," well sung by the Strasbourg Cathedral Choir, coupled with Des Prés's "Ave vera virginitas," which I find less interesting (69693-D, $1.50).

This leaves only "The Voice of Poetry," Volume I (M-375, $6), in which Edith Evans has recorded a number of the classics of the literature. This is not my province; but I will report as a lay listener that I found Miss Evans's voice too cold and unvaried in color for the richness of sound it was called on to produce.

Beginning to play these Columbia records with no suspicion of evil in my innocent critical mind, I was suddenly aware that I was again hearing fuzzy reproduction toward the end of the record-side; and at the end when I ran my finger over the needle point it came away with a large speck of the loose residue that afflicted Columbia records before the recent improvement of their surfaces. In this respect the first, second, and fourth sides of the Bloch set were particularly bad: the second and third playings, each with a fresh chromium needle, gave the same defective reproduction at the end of the side as the first playing. Other records were not as bad as this; but none should be bad at all.

B. H. HAGGIN

Coming Soon in The Nation

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

has just been admitted to Nazi Germany. His first-hand accounts of conditions in Hitler's Third Reich in war time will be published as soon as they are received.

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Letters to the Editors

"Don't Cheer, Boys . . ."

Dear Sirs: The obvious gusto with which liberals, laborites, and radicals are now leaping upon the prostrate necks of the American Communists is hardly edifying. Aside from the question of sportsmanship, it is a dangerous business. By now it should be evident enough that this sort of ganging up on a party which in the public mind has been identified with the causes of the left cannot be localized. It is human enough, no doubt, to take this chance to repay old grudges, but when this is done by tittle-tattling in the *Saturday Evening Post* or before the Dies committee, the effect is that of a boomerang. Sooner or later this spying, informing, purging, and the like will come back and smack the spies, informers, and purgers on their collective noses.

When reactionaries see a kill ahead, they are not choosy about their victims. They are delighted to be able to sidewipe Socialists, liberals, and laborites on their way back from the slaying of the Communists. As one of them said to me after reading the illiterate recommendation of the Dies committee for chasing the Communists underground, "Now we are going to get all of you." And by that he meant everyone to the left of Tom Dewey.

Let the Communists work out their own destiny. They are agile apologists and no doubt will soon think up a new slogan to take the place of "Communism is twentieth-century Americanism." That one of course is definitely out, together with the poster of Paul Revere's horse disguised as Earl Browder.

The job ahead for those of us who want a new social order is to consolidate our forces and work together for the use of the nation's resources for the peace and security of the common man. Our love for the Communists may not be exactly white-hot. In my own case they have accused me of everything from being a Social-Fascist to a co-conspirator with Vincent Astor in a plot to break up their meetings in Union Square. However, I believe that our attitude toward American Communists should be that of Captain Philip at the Battle of Santiago. When Cervera's ill-fated ships were piling up on the beach and the victorious American squadron was steaming alongside, the Captain is reported to have hollered: "Don't cheer, boys; the poor devils are dying."

MCALISTER COLEMAN

Fairlawn, N. J., October 13

The Unromantic Truth

Dear Sirs: Your laudable enthusiasm (in your issue of August 19) over evidence "of the anti-democratic instincts of those now ruling Britain's destinies" led you rather astray in your comments on the Wholesale News Agents' Federation's refusal to handle *Time.* The explanation was simpler and much less romantic. It was the terror of the English libel law felt by ordinary, commercially minded men. The *Time* article, which you consider—by American standards—to be "not unflattering," would almost certainly be actionable in an English court, and the action would lie against the distributors no less than against the publishers. I am afraid that in poor democratic England we have not yet reached the pitch of freedom at which it is permissible to cast doubt on a person's legitimacy without supplying documentary proof, at least. Yet that is what the "not unflattering" article did. The British people are a poor downtrodden lot, one knows, and it will take us a long time to achieve the high standards of American justice and public morals.

AN ENGLISH JOURNALIST

London, October 1

The Cost of Warships

Dear Sirs: The article What Our Warships Cost, by Donald W. Mitchell, in *The Nation* for September 23 is so full of holes that it adds little or nothing to the critical examination of the shipbuilding industry which is seriously needed right now.

A lot of water has gone over the dam since the Nye committee investigated the shipbuilders. The Big Three and the Little Three are no more. There are a big five and a little six or eight. Many of the questions raised by the Nye committee about prices and bidding practices are still unanswered, but Mr. Mitchell sheds little light on the subject. He fails to mention the 10 per cent profit limitation, which has actually returned some cash to the United States Treasury. He skirts the problem of costs instead of tackling it. For example, "While the cost of labor and materials is somewhat higher in the United States than abroad, this cannot account for the entire difference." Mr. Mitchell should have explained that wage rates are at least twice as high here as in Great Britain, and probably three times as high as elsewhere. Direct labor is about one-third the cost of a naval ship. Material is 40 or 45 per cent. What's the difference here? We wish Mr. Mitchell would investigate.

Profits of private shipbuilders have not been so big for the past six years. If they are concealed we would thank Mr. Mitchell for exposing the means of concealment, but he doesn't do that. He cites the cost of navy-yard building, but completely ignores the private shipbuilders' claim that there is no fair basis of comparison, as the navy yards have no taxes, overhead, or various other charges that private contractors must pay, a claim with some basis in fact. Exactly how much, the Nye committee didn't finally determine, and neither does Mr. Mitchell.

As to the Pensacola project, was it advisable to attempt to open up a brand-new shipyard in the Gulf when thousands of shipyard workers were walking the streets in Quincy, Camden, and Newport News, and comparatively few shipbuilders lived in the South?

Let's be sensible. The navy needs, say, six battleships. It is required by law—not by whim, as Mr. Mitchell implies—to award half the construction program to private yards. There are only three yards equipped to build a battleship. Should the navy take the lowest bidder and give it all three? That is impossible, as they don't want, and can't take more than one each. Therefore they get one each. How are you going to have competitive bidding under these circumstances? Moreover, most of the yards today are full. They will bid only for what they want or can handle. Any yard that has an available way right now can get a contract. It can get it at its own price, with this reservation: that the navy or Maritime Commission can throw out any bid it considers unreasonable.

The Industrial Union of Marine and

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Shipbuilding Workers of America, which represents half the private-shipyard workers of the country, proposed two years ago that the competitive-bidding farce be junked and that contracts be openly and frankly allocated on a cost-plus basis. We proposed that a joint governmental commission, with labor representation, make the awards and set up a competent auditing staff that would force uniform cost-accounting systems upon the employers and check actual construction costs. There is no reason why the scandalously slipshod and corrupt practices of the frantic World War period should be repeated. Why wait until the present boom gets out of hand and the government has to set up controls in reckless haste?

PHILIP H. VAN GELDER,
Secretary-Treasurer, Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America

Camden, N. J., October 3

Dear Sirs: Mr. Van Gelder's letter gives me comparatively little to answer as he has not attempted a refutation of my facts. He has, however, made a number of misleading statements.

Only one of his objections possesses much merit. He rightly notes that my treatment of costs was somewhat incomplete. The problem of costs is one of such magnitude as to be quite incapable of detailed treatment in an article of reasonable length. Thousands of units of labor and material go into the making of a ship.

Mr. Van Gelder apparently believes that conditions have considerably changed since the munitions investigation. He states that "the Big Three and Little Three are no more." If he would take the trouble to examine the list of ships for which the navy has recently awarded contracts, he would find this grouping still very much in evidence. Every battleship, cruiser, and airplane carrier, and many destroyers, for which the navy has awarded contracts has been awarded to one of the Big Three. As to the 10 per cent profit limitation, this cannot be effective at the present time because the navy doesn't know accurately the cost of building ships in private yards and therefore cannot tell when costs are being unreasonably inflated.

He wants to know the method by which profits are being concealed and later answers his own question by stating, "No doubt there has been and still is considerable inflation of private shipbuilding costs." In regard to profits, exact figures have not been available for several years. Mr. Van Gelder makes an unsupported claim of low profits and then refutes it himself by pointing out, "Any yard . . . can get a contract . . . *at its own price* with this reservation: that the navy or Maritime Commission can throw out any bid it considers unreasonable." Does he expect this last limitation to be effective at a time when the demand for ships makes the acceptance of private bids imperative? The main point of my article—with which Mr. Van Gelder seems to be in complete agreement—is that we do not have competitive bidding at present.

Lastly, Mr. Van Gelder suggests an awarding of naval contracts "on a cost-plus basis." Cost plus what? If such a plan could effectively determine private construction costs, it would offer an improvement. However, what if, after the government determined the fair cost of ships, private bids failed to come within any reasonable distance of them? The government would still need ships and would have to, as has frequently occurred in the past, make peace with the shipbuilders on or near their own terms. To continue to limit the number of yards so that shipbuilders in the East need not "walk the streets" won't save the government money. Furthermore, wherever cost-plus contracts have been used, namely, in Great Britain and the United States during the World War, the method has been an absolute failure so far as keeping costs down is concerned.

DONALD W. MITCHELL

Chico, Cal., October 11

Problems in Our Backyard

Dear Sirs: The attention of Americans is focused on Europe today, and we are apt to forget social and economic problems in our own backyard. Down South the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union continues a battle for the millions of disinherited tenant farmers, share-croppers, and other farm laborers.

The organization of share-croppers was weakened in the eyes of liberal public opinion when it was forced to withdraw from the C. I. O. after its integrity as an organization had been threatened by Communist disruption and attempted domination. However, it found renewed strength in its own membership, even though its annual money-raising campaign, National Share-Croppers' Week, was openly sabotaged by Communists, who urged every liberal supporter they could reach to withdraw his support.

The officers and membership of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union tightened up their belts and began a campaign to put the union on its own feet. In this they have been successful, though the small dues are still inadequate to meet operating expenses. Militant action in behalf of the membership is under way. A cotton-picking wage has been set, and the share-croppers who last January sat down on the highways of Missouri are demanding increases in wages in line with the increase in living costs caused by the war in Europe.

The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union needs your moral and financial support during the present emergency. Let us not have a blackout in America on its economic problem number one. Contributions may be made to Blaine E. Treadway, acting secretary Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, Box 5215, Memphis, Tennessee.

H. L. MITCHELL

Raleigh, N. C., October 11

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